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A. H. M. C. Mac. Esq^r

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THOUGHTS &c.

1.

THOUGHTS
CONCERNING
MAN'S CONDITION AND DUTIES
IN THIS LIFE,
AND
HIS HOPES IN THE WORLD TO COME,
BY
ALEXANDER LORD PITSLIGO,
(*FOURTH EDITION.*)
WITH
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR,
BY
LORD MEDWYN.
AND A REVIEW BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.

1854

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN drawing up this Biographical Sketch, the Editor has had access to the most authentic materials, and been favoured with the communications of those who have the best access to know all the oral testimony on the subject of Lord PITSLIGO's life.

January, 1835.



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REVIEW

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SIR,

You sometimes take notice of new books; perhaps it may enter into your plan to receive some account of the work of an author, who ventured to enter upon the fallacious engagement, "Come, I will write a duodecimo," and, what is more, has performed his task within the limits he had prescribed himself. Yet the work on which he was employed occupies the whole space betwixt the cradle and the grave, and even passes that last stern limit of earthly hopes and fears, since this little book contains "Thoughts concerning a Man's Condition and Duties in this Life, and his Hopes in the World to Come." Neither is the author of this treatise to be considered as an ordinary retainer of the press, since it is written by no less a person than Alexander Lord Pitsligo, a baron of the ancient kingdom of Scotland, and entitled, therefore, to be numbered with Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, although the Lord of Strawberry-hill might have objected to his brother peer on two accounts; first, that he was a Jacobite, and secondly, that he was a sincere Christian, both great weaknesses in the judgment of the son of Horace Walpole, and the admirer of Voltaire. Accordingly Lord Pitsligo is noticed as an elderly man who went into the rebellion of 1745, and wrote *Essays Moral and Philosophical*, on several subjects, viz. "A View of the Human Faculties," "A Short Account of the World," "Two Discourses," and "An Essay on Self-Love." These were written about 1732, and published in May 1763.

To this short notice of a remarkable and most excellent character, we are now enabled to append an account of Lord Pitsligo, drawn from authentic documents, and highly calculated, in my opinion, to interest not only those who love to look upon the noble spectacle of a brave and lofty-minded man contending with the storms of adversity, but the feelings of that lighter minded class of readers who enjoy the interest annexed to hair-breadth escapes, and the detail of singular sufferings, whether the sufferers be heroes or rogues, an honest man suffering for opinions which to him were sacred, or a rogue engaged in difficulties in his flight from justice.

In this last point of view, every one peruses with an interest, which is, in a moral point of view, somewhat liable to censure, the adventures of a Lazarelle de Tormez, or the numerous accumulations of what are called after the Spanish, Picaresque romances; and the best of us are interested in the adventures of modern adventurers, of modern pick-pockets, swindlers, and thieves, such as Vidocque, who lately rose by due gradations to be a general officer of police from an escaped galley slave, or an estate similar to that of the boy-hero of our modern Athens, Haggart, whose adventures are unfortunately so much a subject of admiration among those of the youths of his class, that they in many instances, have been carried into imitation of his crimes.

In fact, nothing conveys such a deep interest as narrow escapes, effected by the prudence and presence of mind of the person pursued. Our pleasure in tracing their enterprize, (if our feelings when seated in an easy chair could be compared to those which prompt our exertions, when in active exertion,) might be compared to the almost unanimous excitation produced by a fox-hunt, or otter chase,—even by coursing with greyhounds, or pursuing with harriers the timid and inoffensive hare, sports

so natural to the human mind, that labour suspends its task to witness them, and age and decrepitude creep from their hovels to catch a glimpse of the chase, and add a feeble halloo to the engrossing animation which it affords. No sportsman wishes to see the object of pursuit worried in its seat, or mobbed and overcome by its more powerful foes; the chase is what we think of, with its singular chances and precarious hazards of danger and escape. We may demand of more rigid censors, in the words of Uncle Toby, whether, when our pulse beats higher, and our spirits become more animated, at the cry of the hounds, and halloo of the chase—whether, I say, when we ride or run at the summons so universally felt, or when not doing so, we regret that we can ride or run no longer, is it we ourselves, or nature, which has planted the alarm in our bosoms?

But if such an interest prevails in witnessing the vicissitudes in the chase of a hunted animal—if we read with such similar feelings of the arts and efforts of a criminal to escape from justice, how much deeper must the interest be, when the object is a man of eminent rank, amiable manners, and uncontested worth and benevolence, endeavouring to elude the penal consequences of a political error which in his views, however mistaken, was identified with high principle and virtuous feeling! A most singular scene of this nature is presented to us in the biography of Lord Pitsligo, given as an introduction to this little volume.

Of the biographer himself we know nothing, but from what guess we can form, we are disposed to consider him as a Scottish gentleman of the old school, who, loyal in principle and feeling to the present sovereign, might, in the days of Lord Pitsligo, have fallen into the great mistake of liking a white cockade better than a black one; we suppose him to be a member of the ancient,

but poor and suffering Episcopal Church, and one who certainly, time, place, and society fitting, would prefer a Scottish pint of claret to the same English measure of port. In a word, Mr North, I conceive him to be a staunch old Tory of the true-blue complexion, with good blood in his veins, good brains in his head, and a good heart in his bosom. If I am right in my guess, and there are secret signs, like those of masonry, by which such individuals can be recognised, you will, I think, be disposed to pardon a long commentary on a short text so introduced to us.

The life of Lord Pitsligo will probably be the charm which will best recommend his reflections to the public. For the opinions which we form in our minds of ease and safety, are entitled to far less consideration than when we evince patience under adversity, liberal feelings under oppression, and the blessed disposition to do good to those who persecute us, and to answer reviling with kind and liberal construction of the motives which prompt the calumny. This is the conduct of a philosopher and of a Christian: and your readers shall judge by a short sketch, whether the noble person of whom we are treating might not claim the inestimable praise attached to these characters.

Alexander Lord Pitsligo was the fourth who bore that title, descended from a second son of the no less ancient than respectable house of Forbes,—a race of whom it may be said with truth, that the men were brave, and the women virtuous. His estate lay in the district of Aberdeenshire, of which the ready and acute intellects of the inhabitants atone for the sterile and unproductive quality of the soil. Lord Pitsligo was born in 1678, and succeeded to the title and the estate of his father in 1691. He was for some time resident in France, where he attracted the notice, and obtained the

friendship of the celebrated Fenelon, the rather that he coincided with that virtuous and benevolent prelate, in certain warm and enthusiastic religious doctrines, approaching to that Quietism, as it was called, encouraged by the enthusiastic conceptions of Madame Guion. He formed his taste and habits of society upon the best models which Paris then afforded. With a feeling which might be pardoned in a Scottish nobleman, he commenced at the same period an unhappy attachment to the exiled but native Princes of the House of Stuart, which was the cause of all his future misfortunes. This choice, although adopted from conviction, was the more to be regretted, as the greater part of the families of the House of Forbes composed what was called a Whig Clan, under the chief of their name, and were staunch to the cause of the Revolution and the Protestant succession. His religious principles, as a Protestant of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Lord Pitsligo retained unaltered, notwithstanding his intimacy with Fenelon, and his attachment to the somewhat mystical divinity of that excellent prelate.

When Lord Pitsligo returned from France, he took his seat in Parliament in 1700. Here it is no discredit either to his head or heart to say, that, obliged to become a member of one of the contending factions of the time, he adopted that which had for its object the independence of Scotland, and restoration of the ancient race of monarchs. The advantages which were in future to arise from the great measure of a national union were so hidden by the mists of prejudice, that it cannot be wondered at that Lord Pitsligo, like many a high-spirited man, saw nothing but disgrace in a measure forced on by such corrupt means, and calling in its commencement for such mortifying national sacrifices. The English nation, indeed, with a narrow yet not

unnatural view of their own interest, took such pains to encumber and restrict the Scottish commercial privileges, that it was not till the best part of a century after the event, that the inestimable fruits of the treaty began to be felt and known. This distant period, Lord Pitsligo could not foresee. He beheld his countrymen, like the Israelites of yore, led forth into the desert, but his merely human eye could not foresee that, after the extinction of a whole race—after a longer pilgrimage than that of the followers of Moses—the Scottish people should at length arrive at that promised land, of which the favourers of the Union held forth so gay a prospect.

Looking upon the Act of Settlement of the Crown and the Act of Abjuration as unlawful, Lord Pitsligo retired to his house in the country, and threw up attendance on Parliament. Upon the death of Queen Anne, he joined himself in arms with a general insurrection of the Highlanders and Jacobites, headed by his friend and relation the Earl of Mar.

Mar, a versatile statesman and an able intriguer, had consulted his ambition rather than his talents, when he assumed the command of such an enterprise. He sunk beneath the far superior genius of the Duke of Argyle, and after the indecisive battle of Sheriff-moor, the confederacy which he had formed, but was unable to direct, dissolved like a snow-ball, and the nobles concerned in it were fain to fly abroad. This exile was Lord Pitsligo's fate for five or six years. Part of the time he spent at the Court, if it can be called so, of the old Chevalier de Saint George, where existed all the petty feuds, chicanery, and crooked intrigues which subsist in a real scene of the same character, although the objects of the ambition which prompted such arts had no existence. Men seemed to play at being courtiers in that illusory court, as children play at being soldiers.

A reflecting man like Lord Pitsligo was soon disgusted with this scene. In 1720, he returned to Scotland. He had not been attainted, (as is asserted by mistake in Park's edition of Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, vol. v. p. 158, where there seems to be some confusion betwixt the insurrection of 1715 and that of 1745,) and it is to be supposed, had obtained some assurance that his past conduct would not be challenged.

After his return to Scotland, Lord Pitsligo resided chiefly at the castle of that name in the district of Aberdeenshire, called Buchan, where he continued to live, struggling with the difficulties of a small fortune and embarrassed estate, but distinguished for hospitality and kindness towards his neighbours, who held him in the highest respect, by charity and benevolence to the poor, and by good-will to all ranks; so that he was without dispute one of the most popular persons, in a district inhabited by men of singularly quick apprehension, where popularity is not gained by the mere show of merit.

It appears also, that Lord Pitsligo maintained, from his remote residence friendly intercourse and exchange of sentiments with persons, who like himself were somewhat impressed with the doctrines of Quietism—a species of transcendental devotion. His neighbour, Mr Cumming of Pittullie, entertained opinions similar to Lord Pitsligo; and they were also adopted by Dr Heylin, called the Mystical Doctor, the friend of Bishop Butler. This learned divine undertook, what in those days was no small labour, being a journey to Edinburgh to meet Lord Pitsligo. But when he arrived at the Scottish metropolis, and found that he had yet two hundred miles to travel, *au fin fond d' Ecosse*, as Froissart says, he shrunk from the undertaking, and left Buchan unvisited.

It was during this period of his life, that Lord Pitsligo, as mentioned in Wood's Peerage, was twice married, first to Rebecca, daughter of John Norton, merchant in London, second, to Elizabeth Allan, an English lady. The Memoir under review throws no light on these alliances.

Lord Pitsligo was past the age of active exertion, being sixty-seven years old, and affected with an asthmatic complaint, when, in the autumn 1745, the young Chevalier landed in Moidart, on his romantic enterprise. The north of Scotland, Aberdeenshire in particular, abounded with high-spirited cavaliers, bred up in Jacobite principles, and a leader was all they looked for. In this crisis, as we learn from Home, Lord Pitsligo's determination was looked for by all who adhered to the Jacobite cause, as equally esteemed and beloved by his neighbours. "So when he who was so wise and prudent declared his purpose of joining Charles, most of the gentlemen in that part of the country, who favoured the Pretender's cause, put themselves under his command, thinking they could not follow a better or safer guide than Lord Pitsligo."

Lord Pitsligo has left his own testimony, that he took a step of this important nature, upon the most mature consideration, unblended either by ambition or enthusiasm, and with eyes open to the perils in which it might have involved him. Our author quotes from a letter written some years afterwards, where he says,

"I was grown a little old, and the fear of ridicule stuck to me pretty much. I have mentioned the weightier considerations of a family, which would make the censure still the greater, and set the more tongues agoing. But we are pushed on, I know not how,—I thought,—I weighed,—and I weighed again. If there was any enthusiasm in it, it was of the coldest kind; and

there was as little remorse when the affair miscarried, as there was eagerness at the beginning."

In the same letter, he says,

"When I heard of the attainder, I was not in the least surprised at it; only I knew not why those should be called *traitors*, who had betrayed no trusts, nor discovered any secrets. But it is the way of men in power, to give names, in order to justify their severity: and I was heartily sorry to hear that such a number of persons had so deeply felt the effects of it. For my share, I can never be enough thankful to Providence for the safety and quiet I had, when others knew not where to lay their heads. The remarkable instances of friendship gave a greater relish to the safety."

To those friends who recalled the misfortunes of 1715, he replied gaily, "Did you ever know me absent at the second day of a wedding?" meaning, I suppose, that having once contracted an engagement, he did not feel entitled to quit it while the contest subsisted.

We will presently see how precarious was the state for which this excellent man had the patience and courage to be thankful.

Being invited by the gentlemen of the district to put himself at their head, and having surmounted his own desires, he had made a farewell visit to a neighbour's house, where a little boy, a child of the family, brought out a stool to assist the old nobleman in remounting his horse. "My little fellow," said Lord Pitsligo, "this is the severest rebuke I have yet received, for presuming to go on such an expedition."

The die was, however, cast, and Lord Pitsligo went to meet his friends at the rendezvous they had appointed in Aberdeen. They formed a body of well-armed cavalry, gentlemen and their servants, to the number of a hundred men. When they were drawn up in readiness

to commence their expedition, the venerable nobleman their leader moved to their front, lifted his hat, and looking up to heaven, pronounced, with a solemn voice, the awful appeal, "O Lord, Thou knowest that our cause is just!" then added the signal for departure, "March, gentlemen."

Lord Pitsligo, with his followers, found Charles at Edinburgh, on 8th October, 1745, a few days after the Highlanders' victory at Preston. Their arrival was hailed with enthusiasm, not only on account of the timely reinforcement, but more especially from the high character of their leader. Hamilton of Bangour, in an animated and eloquent eulogium upon Pitsligo, states that nothing could have fallen out more fortunately for the Prince, than his joining them did; for it seemed as if Religion, Virtue, and Justice were entering his camp, under the appearance of this venerable old man; and what would have given sanction to a cause of the most dubious right, could not fail to render sacred the very best.

His campaign is thus described in this sketch of his life:—[*See below, pp. 15, 16.*]

When all was lost at Culloden, Lord Pitsligo was reduced to the condition of an outlaw and fugitive. The old man did not fail to find among the common people of Scotland the same intrepid presence of mind and resolute fidelity which formed the protection of many other leaders of the insurgents. The country being exhausted by the exactions of both armies, the half-starved inhabitants did not hesitate to share their coarse and scanty meal with an unknown fugitive. Lord Pitsligo's food was often reduced to water-brose (oat-meal scalded with boiling water); and when he observed that the addition of a little salt would be an improvement, he was answered, "*Ay, man, but saut's touchy;*" i. e. too expensive a luxury.

When he ventured to approach the lands that were once his own, he experienced a little more convenience; yet his own tenants dared notice him no otherwise than by making him eat with the master of the house, and serving up the best provisions which they could offer without affectation, or drawing down remarks.

At this time, 1746, the refuge of this old and infirm man was a cave or place of concealment, constructed under the arch of a bridge, at a remote spot in the moors of Pitsligo, called Pitmaud. Sometimes he was driven from thence into the neighbouring bogs, in which case, like the Covenanters of old, he was annoyed by the lapwings, who, following their instinct, fluttered around any wanderer who intruded on their solitude, without considering whether he was Whig or Tory.

As his castle was not yet occupied by government, Lord Pitsligo took opportunity to see it in secret when occasion would. His wife, who still found refuge there, used afterwards to tell how her maid and she provided for the honoured fugitive the dress of a common mendicant. He sat by them while they made the bags, which were a special part of a gaberlunzie man's equipment in those days; and his lady long related with wonder how cheerful he was while superintending a work which betokened the ruin of his fortune and his state of personal danger. This disguise, though it did not deceive his friends and tenants, saved them from the danger of receiving him in his own person, and served as a protection against soldiers and officers of justice, who were desirous to seize him for the sake of the price set upon his head. On one occasion he was overtaken by his asthma, just as a patrol of soldiers were coming up behind him. Having no other expedient, he sat down by the road-side, and anxiously waiting their approach,

begged alms of the party, and actually received them from a good-natured fellow, who condoled with him at the same time on the severity of his asthma.

On another occasion, surprised in a cobbler's house, Lord Pitsligo was for a moment compelled to assume the dress and tools of St Crispin. Upon a third, rumours having reached those in power that the proscribed Lord Pitsligo used occasionally to conceal himself in a cave on the sea-shore, near a farm called Ironhill, on the rocky coast of Buchan, the soldiers sent to search for the cave went to make enquiries at the farm-house, and to obtain a guide to the place of concealment. The good-wife told them she had no person to send with them, "unless that travelling man would take the trouble." A beggar, who was the traveller, rose up and offered to shew the road. The soldiers went with him. He conducted them to the cave; where they found no Lord Pitsligo. He was not far distant, however, being the very mendicant who shewed them the place.

One of his most trying situations was at his meeting with a fool called Sandy Annand, a well-known character in the county.—[*See below, pp. 23, 24.*]

Lord Pitsligo was attainted of high treason, and in 1748, his estate was seized upon by the crown. To augment his misfortune by a gleam of hope, there occurred an exception to the attainder, because he was therein named Lord Pitsligo, whereas his title properly was Lord Forbes of Pitsligo. The Court of Session sustained this objection, but their judgment in his favour was reversed by the House of Lords. In this desolate situation, proscribed, penniless, deprived of rank, name, and almost the means of existence, except from the charity of the poorest of the peasantry, his life at the mercy of every informer, Lord Pitsligo had yet

a resignation and patience equally superior to the feebleness of mind which sinks beneath human calamity, and the affected stoicism which pretends to rise above human feeling. The *naïve* dignity of the following passage rises "above all Greek, above all Roman praise;" it is the philosophy which can be taught by the Christian religion alone.—[See below, pp. 35. 36.]

After the confiscation of his estate, the condition of Lord Pitsligo became more tolerable, the severity of the search after him being in some measure relaxed. His only son, the Master of Pitsligo, had married the daughter of James Ogilvy, of Auchiries, and the house of Auchiries received the proscribed nobleman occasionally under the name of Mr Brown. The search, however, was frequently renewed, and on the last occasion his escape was so singular as, in the words of the Memoir—[See pp. 30—32.]

The biographer naturally turns his attention to the surprising coincidence of the lady's dream, with the critical arrival of the soldiery; we must, however, observe, that we are not disposed to impute the warning to any supernatural interference; the situation of Lord Pitsligo, his danger, and the excited imagination of Miss Donaldson, might easily suggest such a vision, which fortunately coincided with the arrival of the real danger. But what we do admire as something almost beyond the bounds of ordinary humanity, is the conduct of Lord Pitsligo himself. His mind soared, in extremity of danger, alike above fear, the most selfish of passions, and above revengeful or vindictive feelings towards those who had inflicted on him so much pain and danger, and his immediate attention to the comforts of those by whom he was hunted and persecuted, shews not only that he possessed complete self-possession, but that his thoughts, the instant that the pressure of his own

immediate danger was removed, were turned to the sufferings of others, even to those of the men who had been so recently the agents of persecution.

By degrees the heat of civil rancour ceased, and the Government of that day, who (thinking very differently from Lord Pitsligo) had deemed it scarce possible to exert severity enough in avenging upon the authors the hearty fright they had sustained, were at length satiated. Lord Pitsligo, like others in his situation, was permitted to steal back into the circle of his friends, unpersecuted and unnoticed. The venerable old nobleman of whom we speak was thus suffered to remain at his son's residence of Auchiries unmolested during the last years of an existence protracted to the extreme verge of human life.—[See p. 41.]

His son, the Master of Pitsligo, died without issue, and the title became extinct. The heir-male is the present Sir John Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet, representative of a family in which honour and worth are hereditary.

The personal character of Lord Pitsligo seems to have been of that fascinating and attractive kind, that no man could come into intimate contact, without loving, honouring, and esteeming him. Dr King, the principal of St Mary's Hall, Oxford, a severe and splenetic judge of mankind, speaks thus: "Whoever is so happy, either from his natural disposition, or his good judgment, constantly to observe S. Paul's precept, *To speak evil of no one*, will certainly acquire the love and esteem of the whole community of which he is a member. But such a man as the *rara avis in terris*; and among all my acquaintance, I have known only one person to whom I can with truth assign this character. The person I mean, is the present Lord Pitsligo, of Scotland. I not only never heard this gentleman speak an ill

word of any man living, but I always observed him ready to defend any other person who was ill-spoken of in his company. If the person accused were of his acquaintance, my Lord Pitsligo would always find something good to say of him as a counterpoise. If he were a stranger, and quite unknown to him, my lord would urge in his defence the general corruption of manners, and the frailties and infirmities of human nature.

"It is no wonder that such an excellent man, who besides, is a polite scholar, and has many other great and good qualities, should be universally admired and beloved, insomuch, that I persuade myself he has not one enemy in the world. At least, to this general esteem and affection for his person, his preservation must be owing; for since his attainder he has never removed far from his own house, protected by men of different principles, and unsought for and unmolested by government."

Having spoken so much of Lord Pitsligo's personal character, I will not delay your readers long in commenting upon his Lordship's literary works. He neither displays nor affects any peculiar depth of metaphysical investigation, nor does he drag into the field any contested texts or doubtful doctrines. The character of the devotion of individuals must depend upon the individual temperament of the worshipper; nor are we authorized to think, that he who worships with holy fear and reverence, is inferior to him who, worshipping alike in spirit and in truth, camps upon the higher places of the mountains. Lord Pitsligo was of the first class of devotionalists, and, ever ready to pray or praise the Deity, was unwilling to trust himself with a deep investigation of the more awful doctrines of Christianity, apprehensive lest in doing so he might fall into criminal doubts or false theories. This difference in the character

of devotion in different bosoms recalls the distinction mentioned betwixt the Cherubim and Seraphim, in which the former are said to excel in knowledge and the latter in love. His firm belief in an overruling Providence, and in the doctrine that every thing that happened was for the best—that confidence in the goodness of Heaven, which supported Lord Pitsligo through so many dangers—made him object to innocent phrases in ordinary use, because they seemed to impeach the kindness of Providence. He reprimanded his gardener for saying it *threatened* rain, and told him he ought to have said, it *promised* rain. This is of course hypercritical. We could not say, It promises an earthquake or a plague. These calamities do indeed come by permission of Providence, like every thing else, but they are ministers of punishment, which we may be permitted to dread and to deprecate. But though Lord Pitsligo was early impressed with the doctrines of Quietism, we cannot trace them in his Thoughts to any violent degree or extent. They may be called,

The harvest of a pensive eye,
Which dwells and broods on his own breast.

And the burden is expressed in the words of a venerable correspondent of our biographer,—“To him God was all in all, and the whole creation, in itself considered, was nothing.”

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THE Author of the following work was the only son of Alexander Forbes, third Lord Pitsligo, and Lady Sophia Areskine, daughter of John, ninth Earl of Marr. He was born on the 22d May 1678; and while yet a minor, succeeded his father in his title and estates, in 1691. With the view of completing his education, he went to France when about nineteen years of age, where he resided for some time.

Although so young a man, a similarity of taste and disposition recommended him to the notice, and secured to him the friendship, of the pious and amiable Fenelon. It was at this time that the sect of the Quietists attracted considerable notice. Their errors arose rather from an exaggeration of what was in itself good, than from the adoption of principles essentially erroneous; and by the use of language to describe their feelings and affections, more suited to an earthly than to a heavenly object of love. Still their doctrines, which inculcated love to God, on the purest and most disinterested motives, and a spiritual communion with Him, which led to the most unqualified resignation of the heart to the divine will, were extremely attractive, and not unimproving, to the few whose exalted piety, contemplative habits, and well-regulated minds, enabled them to comprehend, and relish, and profit by such sublime speculations, without being led astray by

their enthusiastic and unpractical tendency. Lord Pitsligo, with a heart naturally warm, and alive to devotional feelings, was led to view with approbation the opinions of Madame Guion; and their adoption by such a man as Fenelon, could not fail with him to afford the most powerful recommendation of them. We may believe, too, that the friendship of Fenelon proved a sufficient introduction for a young man of Lord Pitsligo's rank and accomplishments, to the Hotel de Beauvilliers, which was at that time frequented by many of those distinguished characters who graced the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV.

After some time spent on the continent in this improving society, he returned to his own country, to discharge the duties of his station, and take his hereditary share in its legislature. He first took the oaths and his seat in Parliament on 24th May 1700.

Lord Pitsligo was from principle attached to the house of Stuart, and belonged to the party which has since been termed Jacobites. This led him into opposition against the court party, who were anxious to bring about a settlement of the crown to the exclusion of the exiled family. But so far as we can judge at this distance of time, his opposition was dictated by a conscientious dissent from measures of which he disapproved. It was not a factious attempt to defeat them, merely because they were the measures of those politically opposed to him.

Two instances may be noticed. The attempt to establish a Scottish colony at Darien had failed, partly from the effort proving too extensive for the resources of the country, but chiefly from the jealousy of the English, and the measures sanctioned by King William, out of deference to his English subjects, for crushing this great undertaking. Its failure had involved the nation in deep distress, and with the view of obtaining redress for

the losses sustained, and of getting the obstacles to its success removed, various Resolutions were moved in the Scottish Parliament. One was unanimously carried, that the Settlement at Darien was legal, and that the Company in making and prosecuting of the said settlement acted warrantably, by virtue of the act of Parliament and patent establishing it. As this was intended to lay the foundation of a claim to the protection and influence of the British Crown against Spain, it would have produced a collision which the English ministry were most anxious to avoid. It was but too apparent that neither they, nor their master, influenced as he was by the interests of his Dutch subjects, chose to consider the destruction of this Scots colony by the Spaniards, as an act of hostility against the English, for the Parliament of England had already declared, with a mean and narrow jealousy, that the Settlement was inconsistent with the good of the plantation trade of that kingdom. The court party wished that the remonstrance should be reduced to the innocuous form of an address to the king, which would meet with a soft answer, but have no other result; while a great number of the members, among whom was Lord Pitsligo, with the Duke of Hamilton at their head, maintained that it was more consistent with the honour and independence of Scotland, and moreover was more likely to obtain a redress of their grievances, that it should be embodied in an act of their legislature.* The influence of the court prevailed; the motion to address was carried, and the result was as had been expected. Lord Pitsligo, with the feelings of a genuine patriot, joined in the protest against this vote.

On the accession of Queen Anne, Lord Pitsligo again took the oath of allegiance, and attended Parliament,

* Records of Parliament, 14th Jan. 1701.

when the subject of the Union was proposed. It appears that he was not friendly to that measure. The great advantages which have resulted from it, were not at that time so obvious, when opposed by the loss of national independence, and the fear of the English predominance, so recently exhibited in the case of the Darien colony, as to make his adherence to the Jacobite view of this measure an imputation either upon his political sagacity or his patriotism. In the discussions which took place on passing the Act which authorised the Queen to name Commissioners for treating with those of England for a Union, he voted under the banners of the Duke of Atholl, and protested * that the Scottish commissioners should not leave this country, till an obnoxious act of the English Parliament, dictated by a mean jealousy towards Scotchmen, should be rescinded. The court party prevailed, that the remonstrance on this subject should also be conveyed in the milder form of an address.

The Parliament met in October 1706, for taking into consideration the articles of Union which had been agreed upon between the Commissioners of the two countries. Lord Pitsligo did not attend, whether from any private reason, or that he did not expect any advantage to result to his country by expressing his disapprobation, has not been ascertained.

One of the earliest fruits of the Union was the settlement of the crown, and the extension to Scotland of the oath of abjuration, which effectually excluded all conscientious Jacobites, like Lord Pitsligo, from interfering in public business, or endeavouring to serve their country in the character of public men.

Here then terminated, just at the threshold of his career, the public life of this accomplished nobleman;

* Records of Parliament, 1st Sep. 1705.

and but for the two unfortunate and ill-judged attempts to restore the House of Stuart, the rest of his life would have been spent in privacy, and repose, and competence.

The family estate of Pitsligo was at this time much involved in debt, and the general poverty of the country, aggravated at the moment by the distress produced by the failure of the Darien scheme, and the succession of calamitous seasons, which marked the close of the seventeenth century, rendered a state of pecuniary embarrassment to a landholder almost irretrievable. It was the mortification of Lord Pitsligo's early years, that he was reduced to the necessity of making arrangements with the creditors of his family; and this feeling, to a man of high honour and principle, damped the satisfaction of many an hour of his after life.

The accession of George I, and the dismissal of the Tory ministry of Queen Anne, gave the signal for the attempt to restore the family of Stuart; and, in Scotland, the Earl of Marr, with too little consideration, raised the standard of king James at Kildrummie, in September 1715. He was immediately joined by Lord Pitsligo, who was his near relation, but still more bound to him by the cause in which he was embarked.

He accompanied Lord Marr in his progress to the south. He was present at the battle of Sheriff-muir, and was with that portion of the forces which was dispersed there by the Duke of Argyle. After the battle, Lord Pitsligo concealed himself among the common people, witnessing their kindly feelings and compassion towards distress, as well as their sympathy with the cause in which he had suffered. After remaining some time in this unpleasant situation, and apprehending danger from the new government, if he continued in this country, he resolved to visit the Continent a second time. He went first to London, where he remained in

concealment for about four months, till he found a fit opportunity for making his escape to Holland. Here, and in the Netherlands, he spent some time. The great and good Fenelon was no more; but the friend of one whose memory was so dear to the Belgians, who was well acquainted with the court language of Europe, who had been intimate with many of the literati of France, who besides, was a man of rank, and an exile from his country, on account of his adherence to principle in opposition to interest, could not fail to find an easy introduction to society.

The attainders in 1715 were not numerous, and were confined to those most prominently engaged. Lord Pitaligo was not among the number; and his friends in this country negotiated with the government for permission for him to return home. This, however, was refused. Submitting to his fate, he determined to avail himself of this opportunity of improvement, by visiting different places on the Continent. With this view he first proceeded to Munich, from thence went to Vienna; and, after spending some time there, fixed his residence more permanently at Venice. He was then invited to join the Court of James at Rome, where he found Lord Marr, and others, who were attached to that prince.

Some of the letters written by Lord Pitaligo during this voluntary exile, to his friend and neighbour Mr. Cumine of Pittulie, have been preserved. The following will be read with interest, as exhibiting the picture of a well regulated mind, maturing under the discipline of misfortune, for those still more irremediable calamities with which the close of his life, in the decay and weakness of age, was marked. It is without a date or notice of the place whence it was written; but it is supposed to have been from Vienna. It begins with advising his friend to travel, and mentions how he may be heard of

at Paris, and thus continues;—"In all events, my Dear Friend, study to keep your mind easy; we live but from moment to moment, and the whole earth, though we had it and all our wishes, is not able to give us real happiness; and, consequently, our disappointments may be called nothing but the loss of some amusements, or rather the change of one for another, for we have something to amuse us everywhere; and to tell you plain truth, I have been several times but indifferently diverted abroad. A thousand thanks for the offer of your money. As to your advice of making such an application, it is already done. The person* assures you your advice will be always welcome, and the less apology for it the better. I know he had abundance of mortification in that affair in some respects, which I have not room to mention; but on the other hand, the handsome behaviour of some he treated with, was a real satisfaction. These things are mixed."

The caution which it was necessary to observe in carrying on a correspondence with his friends in this country, for fear of involving them in danger from their intercourse with an exiled traitor, is still further exemplified by the following letter, written probably from Holland or Flanders in 1717, which contains, on the same sheet with his letter to Mr Cunaine, a letter to Lady Pitsligo, written as if from a third person in an humble sphere of life, giving an account of her husband.

"Dec. 6. N. S.

"I have your last, my Dear Friend, by the Post, and the other with James Chrystie's ship, of a much older

* This evidently means Lord Pitaligo himself, but the third person is adopted in case of the letter miscarrying, and getting into unfriendly hands. None of his letters, at this period, are subscribed with any name. The application mentioned was probably for permission to return home.

date, came to my hand yesterday. I have a thousand proofs of your friendship, though you had not added that of offering me your money. I believe my folks at home will furnish what I have use for; but my obligations to you are the same as if I had accepted your offer. I have such an aversion at compliments, and have used myself so little to them all my life, that some people might reckon me cold and indifferent, but I fancy you care little for idle words. The most solid proof I shall be able to give you of my goodwill, (for I believe I shall never be so rich as to offer you more,) is to endeavour to have as much of your company as I can; and I protest to you sincerely that the poor corner I have some interest in, is still the more agreeable to me, when I think of your neighbourhood. If you please to tell the same to Mr Ogilvy,* it will save the pains of a letter. I was nearer a resolution as to my motions a while ago, than I am just now, from an account that came here t'other day from Edinburgh, shewing that the Advocate had got orders to prosecute those that had gone home without licence; but I hope the Parliament will determine people ere long, and I shall not fail to let you know what course I take. You have done very well in deferring your going abroad, upon the reason you mention; I am sorry for the thing, and I wish every body the right use of their trials. I wrote to your sister by Mr Barclay, who, I hope, has arrived safely. The winds have been very high on this coast these several days, which makes people very apprehensive of loss by sea. To take a view of the world, upon some sides the prospect is pretty dismal; storms and shipwrecks, and death in so many different shapes; and

* Mr Ogilvy of Auchiries, whose daughter became the wife of Lord Pittligo's only son, and in whose house he spent the latter years of his life, and closed his eyes, when by forfeiture he was deprived of his own home.

as to moral evils, it is still more melancholy, how much ill humour and folly, and disingenuity, and a thousand things else do we see every day. But, on the other hand, we see yet some remains of honesty and friendship, and other agreeable things, which is really a wonder, considering the fallen state of human Nature, and the Curse that was inflicted on the earth; so that we are much in the wrong when we fall into chagrin, since our lot is so easy with reference to our exile (I dont mean by the Government), and still easier when we compare with what happens to some of our neighbours. I think, just now, I am not in great hazard of being melancholy, though I am persuaded I would find better supports against it elsewhere than here." Then follows about a commission for books, which Pittulis had given him. "Though I had a mind, I have scarce left room to mention all my friends, especially being to add a word to one in particular; pray, therefore, tell any of them you have occasion to see, that I am still their faithful servant, as I am yours, Dear Friend. Adieu."

Follows on the same sheet of paper.

"TO MY LADY P.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am so much in use of the familiar style, that I must give you the same compellation I do my other friends, but the Criticks tell me *Dear* is not only a kind word, but it intimates respect too. I was very well pleased with your last letter. I suppose the best news I can tell you is, that your husband is well; he says he has many of his neighbours to thank for their civilities to you in his absence. I had a letter from Anchmedden, (one very much your friend,) which I shall answer by the ship that brought it. At that time it

seems your son was tender, but I hope it is over now, because the last letter had no word of it. * * * I have not heard from your friends in London this great while. I wrote twice, but got no answer; I supposed they were not in town. I would be glad to see them, and it would be one step nearer home. You guessed right that I was not very fond of travelling. Contentment is a good thing when people can come at it. Believe me, Dear Madam, I wish you all manner of happiness."

The petty cabals and intrigues which existed in the court of James, shew how much all courts are alike in their principles and practice; and that it is not the immediate prospect of the objects of ambition, which engenders the seeds of intrigue in the candidates for royal favour; for here, these existed in as great vigour, as if power, honours, and wealth, had been at the instant disposal of the mimic monarch. Lord Pitsligo's high sense of honour, his correct moral character, and protestant principles of religion were not suited to the meridian of such a court. He soon fell into disgrace, and Lord Marr and he quitted Rome in 1720;—he to return home; while Lord Marr, who had been attainted, took up his residence in the Netherlands.

The embarrassment of Lord Pitsligo's affairs had greatly increased during his absence; and what was a still greater source of vexation to him, he was obliged to commence a law-suit against a relation and friend, who had undertaken as a trustee for him, to continue the system of purchasing up the debts affecting his estate. He could not extricate himself from these difficulties, except by disposing of a considerable part of his hereditary property, and he only retained the small remainder of it, by paying off debts secured upon it to an amount little short of the value of the property, in the then depressed

state of the country. But these adverse circumstances which marked his early career, were well calculated to nourish and mature the virtues of his future life.

He continued now to reside constantly at Pitaligo Castle, in the remote district of Aberdeenshire, which is called Buchan, withdrawn entirely from public life. His fortune was too limited to admit of any occupations which could lead to expense; and his tastes and habits were altogether domestic, and suited to the circumstances in which he was placed. Kindness and charity to the poor, hospitality and cheerful intercourse with his friends and neighbours, were among the prominent features of his character. He also devoted himself much to literature, and introduced into that part of Scotland a taste for the mystic writers, with whose works he had become acquainted on the Continent. He found in the amiable disposition of his nearest neighbour and friend, Mr Cumine of Pittullie, a congenial mind,* who became an equally ardent admirer of so much of that theology as sublimates devotion, and purifies the motives which lead to the practice of the duties of Christianity; and as both of them were men of talent and consideration, and of the most amiable dispositions, they were looked up to as patterns of what was right in opinion and practice. And thus an atmosphere, as it were, of high-toned religious feeling, was spread around them, which influenced a large portion of their intimates and associates. The flame was invigorated by an intercourse kept up with those of similar views and sentiments elsewhere: and in particular, it has been

* "A Discourse upon Religion," addressed to his children, which was published after his death, though containing some singular opinions on speculative points of doctrine, gives much sound, practical, and truly Christian advice, as to the duties of life. The book shews, that the virtues and talents of the writer were such as peculiarly to have qualified him for being the friend of Lord Pitaligo.

handed down, that Dr John Heylyn, the friend of Bishop Butler, and who, in his lifetime, was distinguished by the name of the Mystic Doctor, was an intimate friend of Lord Pitaligo's; and at one time even came so far as Edinburgh, a great journey in those days, on his way to pay a visit to his friend. But after having made out so much of his journey, probably from finding the distance he had yet to travel farther than he expected, and no convenient mode of travelling at that time within his reach, he returned without accomplishing his purpose.*

In this manner Lord Pitaligo's life was quietly passing, when, in the year 1745, Prince Charles Edward unexpectedly landed in the West Highlands, with only seven attendants, to claim the throne of his ancestors, in behalf of his father. The enthusiastic attachment which distinguished the adherents of his family, and which in youthful breasts was roused by the romantic nature of the adventure, in Lord Pitaligo's more thoughtful mind, was founded on principle and a sense of duty. He obeyed the call of him whom he considered his rightful monarch.†

His age and infirmities (for by this time his health was beginning to break down, and he was afflicted with an asthmatic complaint), might have justified him in confining his exertions for the cause to the forwarding

* Dr Heylyn was abroad on the Continent at the same time with Lord Pitaligo's first visit to it. They had frequented the same society, and were singularly alike in their sentiments and dispositions: this was the foundation of the heartfelt friendship which continued to subsist between them through life. Dr Heylyn died the year before Lord Pitaligo, and the posthumous volume of his works, containing, among other things, his Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles, was the last book which his friend read, prior to his own death.

† "It was not ambition," says Dr King, "but a love for his country, and a conscientious regard to his duty, which drew this honest man (however he might be mistaken) into the Rebellion of 1745.—A great prince who had been well informed of my Lord Pitaligo's character, would immediately have pardoned him, and have restored the little estate which he had forfeited."—*Anecdotes of His Own Times*, p. 145.

of the levies, and animating the patriotism of others. But being invited by the gentlemen of that district to place himself at their head, and lead them to support their Prince, if he hesitated to prepare himself for the field, it was solely from the feeling that it might give room for ridicule, if one of his age should embark in such an undertaking. A sense of duty, however, and the call of his friends prevailed. Before setting out on this fatal expedition, he went to take leave of a neighbour, and when about to remount his horse, the late Mr Fraser of Memsie, then a little boy, the son of his friend, brought out a stool to assist him, when he observed,—“My little fellow, this is the severest reproof I have yet met with, for presuming to go on such an expedition.”

It was natural for Lady Pitaligo to think that this undertaking was likely to prove too much for the broken health and advanced years of her husband, besides the great risk of its failure, and the serious consequences which must follow from it, if it did not prove successful. Hence she used every argument which prudence and affection could suggest, to dissuade Lord Pitaligo from embarking in so hazardous an adventure, reminding him of the calamities which had befallen those engaged in the previous attempt in 1715. His resolution, however, was not to be shaken by such considerations. He urged the calls of duty and of loyalty as his motives, and finding that these made little impression, he closed the discussion by quoting, in a jocular way, a common saying in that part of the country, “*There never was a bridal, but the second day was the best;*” thus indicating the firm purpose of his mind, from which he was not now to be deterred, and in such a manner as to cause Lady Pitaligo to suppose that she had allowed a woman’s fears to magnify the dangers and fatigues of the enterprise beyond their due proportion.

He took with him as his principal attendant John Pirie, who had been some time before in his service, and who long survived, and used to mention the hardships and hazards that his venerable master encountered during the expedition. When about to set out, John was taking his horse to the steps or usual mounting-place, as he had been accustomed to do, in order to enable him the more easily to get on horseback; but Lord Pitsligo called upon him to stop, and putting his foot into the stirrup, sprang into the saddle with all the vigour and animation of youth, so ardent was he in the cause in which his heart was so deeply engaged, that he seemed inspired with new life for the hazardous undertaking.*

He appointed the friends who were to accompany him, to meet him at Aberdeen. There they accordingly assembled; and when they were drawn up ready to set out on this ill-fated expedition, Lord Pitsligo, whose habitual feelings of devotion, it might be supposed, would not forsake him on the present occasion, so important to himself and to so many of his friends, as well as to his prince and country, stepped out in front of them, took off his hat, and solemnly looking up to Heaven, said, "Lord, Thou knowest that our cause is just," and then gave the word—"March, gentlemen."

Lord Pitsligo arrived in the camp at Duddingstone on 9th October 1745, after the battle of Preston; the gentlemen, with their servants who accompanied them, well armed and mounted, formed a body of cavalry that served under him, exceeding a hundred men. "This peer," says Home,† "who drew after him such a

* The state of Lord Pitsligo's health at this time, and how amply it would have justified a man who acted only from the dictates of worldly wisdom to remain at home, will best appear from the *fac simile* of the conclusion of a letter, written by him just before the arrival of the Prince in Scotland.

† History of the Rebellion, p. 128.

number of gentlemen, had only a moderate fortune, but was much beloved, and greatly esteemed by his neighbours, who looked upon him as a man of excellent judgment, and of a wary and cautious temper. So when he who was so wise and prudent, declared his purpose of joining Charles, most of the gentlemen in that part of the country, who favoured the Pretender's cause, put themselves under his command, thinking they could not follow a better or a safer guide than Lord Pitsligo."

This testimony is the more valuable as it comes from a political opponent,—one who fought as a zealous volunteer for the house of Hanover. But however cautious and prudent Lord Pitsligo may have appeared in the eyes of his contemporaries in the ordinary conduct of life, his was not the cold, calculating temper, which would prefer safety to duty;—his notions of right, his sense of honour, and his feelings of patriotism, alike represented it as his duty to support his exiled prince, and would have equally influenced his conduct, although he had thought less favourably than he did, of the success of the cause he reckoned so just. And while his friends and neighbours thought they could best serve the prince to whom they were devoted, by placing themselves under his command, instead of his example misleading them, as it turned out, to their ruin, it probably rather tended to regulate their ardour; and by uniting them made their exertions in the cause more efficient, and even the expedition safer to themselves, by means of this league of brotherhood, which attached them to each other, and to their amiable and judicious leader.

The reception which Lord Pitsligo met with from the Prince, corresponded with such an important acquisition of strength to his cause. An eye-witness has observed, that "it seemed as if religion, virtue, and justice, were entering the camp under the appearance of this vene-

nable old man.”* He was appointed a member of the Prince’s council, and was always treated by him with peculiar kindness and regard. Writing to a friend, he says,—“I got to Edinburgh in very tolerable health, but it soon broke, and I had occasion to discover the Prince’s humanity, I ought to say tenderness; this is giving myself no great airs, for he shewed the same dispositions to everybody.” Lord Pitsligo continued with the expedition during its march into England, its retreat from that country, and till the final overthrow of all their hopes at Culloden. He was but ill qualified to bear the fatigues and privations of such a campaign, continued as it was through the winter; and it is said that the Prince, more than once, insisted upon him taking the use of his carriage, while he, with the ardour of youthful heroism, marched on foot, at the head of his faithful Highlanders, sharing with them their hardships and dangers.

After the battle of Culloden, Lord Pitsligo concealed himself for some time in the mountainous district of the country, and a second time experienced the kindly dispositions of the country people, even the lowest and poorest, towards the victims of misfortune. The country had been much exhausted for the supply of the Prince’s army, and the people who gave him shelter and protection were extremely poor, yet they freely shared their humble and scanty fare with the unknown stranger. This fare was what is called *water-brose*, that is, oatmeal moistened with hot water, on which he chiefly subsisted for some time; and when on one occasion he remarked, that its taste would be much improved by a little salt, the reply was, “Aye, man, but sa’t’s touchy,” meaning it was too expensive an indulgence for them.

* See afterwards.

However, he was not always in such indifferent quarters ; for he was concealed for some days at the house of New Miln, near Elgin, along with his friends, Mr Cumine of Pittullie, Mr Irvine of Drum, and Mr Mercer of Aberdeen, where Mrs King herself made their beds and waited upon them, in order that their being harboured there might not be known to any of the servants in the house.

In our own times, the calamitous consequences of civil commotions and intestine war have too often met us in historic detail, to make the picture of them a novelty : but as this country has been happily exempt from being the immediate witness of such painful scenes, the following details may not prove uninteresting ; they are among the latest occurrences of the kind, which were but too common formerly in our history ; and while they should make us thankful for our privilege in being no longer exposed to such, they at the same time serve to illustrate the character of our author.

After living on the hospitality, and trusting to the honour of strangers for some time, Lord Pitsligo resolved to return, to live or die among his own people, and he did so accordingly, travelling only in the night-time.

It was known in London that in the end of April 1746, he was lurking about the coast of Buchan, with the view, as it was supposed, of finding an opportunity of making his escape to France.* This appears never to have been his intention. He had when young and in the vigour of life, tasted sufficiently of the calamities of exile, and thus knew too well that sickening of the heart which a forcible separation from friends, from family and from home, produces, to run the same course in his declining years, with broken health, and ruined fortune,

* See Scots Magazine for May 1746, p. 338.

and hopeless prospects. His determination was to keep himself concealed among the kind friends and attached tenantry, whom his virtues and misfortunes had secured to him, during the remainder of a life which he probably thought could not be prolonged, even if not abridged by the arm of the law. But it required the utmost caution on his part, to elude the search that was made for him. To such an extremity was he at one period reduced, that he was actually obliged sometimes to conceal himself in a hollow place in the earth, under the arch of a small bridge at Craigmaud, upon his own estate, about nine miles up into the country from Fraserburgh, and about two and a half from where New Pitsligo now is, which was scarcely large enough to contain him; and this most uncomfortable place seems to have been selected for his retreat, just because there was little chance of detection, as no one could conceive it possible that a human being could be concealed in it. At this time also he lay sometimes concealed in the day-time in the mosses near Craigmaud, and was much annoyed by the lapwings flying about the place. His fear was, that this would attract notice to the spot, and direct those who were in search of him in their pursuit.*

As yet the estate of Pitsligo was not taken possession of by government, and Lady Pitsligo continued to reside at the castle. Lord Pitsligo occasionally paid secret

* *Leyden*, in his *Scenes of Infancy*, thus affecting notices the same incident in the history of the fugitive Covenanters :

And though the pitying Sun withdraws his light,
The lapwings' clamorous whoop attends their flight,
Pursues their steps where'er the wanderers go,
Till the shrill scream betrays them to the foe.
Poor Bird, where'er the roaming swain intrudes
On thy bleak heaths and desert solitudes,
He curses still thy scream and clamorous tongue,
And crushes with his foot thy moulting young.

Leyden's Remains, p. 411.

visits to it in disguise. The disguise that he assumed, was that of a mendicant, and Lady Pitaligo's maid was employed to provide him with two bags to put under his arms, after the fashion of the *Edie Ochiltrees* of those days. He sat beside her while she made them, and she long related with wonder how cheerful he was, while thus superintending this work, which betokened the ruin of his fortune, and the forfeiture of his life.

In adopting this disguise, he paid a compliment to the charitable disposition of the peasantry, who, to the utmost of their means, are ever willing to assist those who are poorer than themselves; at the same time we may believe the disguise was assumed chiefly with a view of eluding the English soldiers and friends of government, and to make the risk of harbouring him less dangerous, than if he had claimed protection in his own character; for he chiefly went among his own tenants in the Muirs of Pitsligo, the most distant part of his estate from Fraserburgh; and, in general, they did not appear to be deceived by his disguise. But they shewed no mark of having discovered the true character of the poor beggar, except by always making him eat with the *goodman*, and setting before him better than their usual fare, and by giving him the best bed in the house. On one occasion the *goodwife* of the house where he went to lodge for the night, after looking earnestly at him, observed, that she was just going to make *kail-brose* for the family supper, but that she feared he would not like the brose; to which, in true character, and with great pleasantry, he replied, in the familiar proverb, *Beggars must not be chusers*. In his occasional visits to Pitaligo Castle, under his disguise, he used to recount to the family the amusing adventures which he met with in his wanderings.

On more than one occasion, he met with a very narrow

escape. When walking out in his disguise, one day he was suddenly overtaken by a party of dragoons, scouring the country in pursuit of him. The increased exertion, from his desire to elude them, brought on a fit of asthmatic coughing, which completely overcame him. He could proceed no further, and was obliged to sit down by the roadside, where he calmly waited their approach. The idea, suggested by his disguise and infirmity, was acted upon, and, in his character of a mendicant, he begged alms of the dragoons who came to apprehend him. His calmness and resignation did not forsake him, no perturbation betrayed him, and one of the dragoons stopped, and, with great kindness of heart, actually bestowed a mite on the venerable old man, condoling with him, at the same time, on the severity of his cough.

On another occasion, Lord Pitsligo had sought and obtained shelter in a shoemaker's house; and shortly after, a party of dragoons was seen approaching. Their errand was not doubtful, and the shoemaker, who had recognized the stranger, was in the greatest trepidation, and advised him to put on one of the workmen's aprons, and some more of his clothes, and to sit down on one of the stools, and pretend to be mending a shoe. The party came into the shop in the course of their search, and the shoemaker observing that the soldiers looked as if they thought the hands of this workman were not very like those of a practised son of King Crispin, and fearing that a narrower inspection would betray him, with great presence of mind gave orders to Lord Pitsligo, as if he had been one of his workmen, to go to the door and hold one of the horses, which he did accordingly. His own composure, and entire absence of hurry, allayed suspicion, and thus he escaped this danger. He used afterwards jocularly to say, he had been at one time a Buchan cobbler.

Lord Pitsligo occasionally changed the place of his retreat for greater security, and he used sometimes to conceal himself in a cave among the rocks, in the bold and almost inaccessible coast of Buchan, near a farm called Ironhill, a little to the west of the village of Rosehearty. The cave, which still goes by the name of Lord Pitsligo's Cave, is about midway down the cliff, the rocky barrier of that sea-beat coast, and may be reached by a path both from the land above and from the shore below, though with some difficulty. It is narrow at the entrance, but after passing through two smaller apartments, the innermost may be termed a large and lofty room, in which there is a spring of water welling from a crevice of the rock, which falls into a cistern cut out of the rock by the hands of Lord Pitsligo himself, who thus relieved some of the solitary hours he was obliged to spend in this cheerless abode. Neither need we doubt that the solitude, the scene, and the circumstances which made such a spot a convenient shelter from the storms of adversity, awakened in a mind peculiarly contemplative and devotional, feelings which would brighten even its twilight-darkness; and that he found, with the excellent Hammond in his retreat from similar persecution, that, the "grots and caves lie as open to the celestial influences as the fairest and most beautiful temples."

The knowledge of this concealment was confided to James Rainnie, a faithful follower, tenant of the farm of Smithyhill, near the church of Pitsligo; provisions were sent daily from the Castle to Smithyhill, which were taken to the cave by Rainnie's daughter, a little girl, whose occupation it was to herd her father's sheep on the *braes* close by, and who was therefore less likely to be suspected and watched, but could choose the best time when she was unobserved for scrambling to the cave.

When, however, snow was on the ground, this could not serve as a secure retreat, as the footmarks of his little attendant bringing him his daily meal must have soon betrayed him to those who were so long on the outlook for him; for it was well known that he was harboured in the country, and that he occasionally went about in disguise. Notwithstanding all the precautions taken, it was, however, discovered that the cave among the rocks of Ironhill was one of the places used for his concealment; so that, on one occasion, information having been given that he was actually at the moment in the cave, a party of soldiers came from Fraserburgh to the farm-house, in order to get a guide to shew them the cave among the rocks. It happened that there was no person in the house but the *goodwife*, and Lord Pitligo in his disguise of a mendicant, who had fortunately left his retreat, and had come to her house in prosecution of his assumed vocation. When asked to send some person as a guide, she said, she had nobody to send, unless that travelling man would go and shew them the way to the rocks. Lord Pitligo, with his usual composure, and without any embarrassment, agreed to conduct them; and after having pointed out the rocks to them, and left them without exciting any suspicion, he called again at the house of Smithyhill, and good-humouredly told the *goodwife* she should not send travelling men on such errands.

On another occasion, Lord Pitligo was sleeping in James Rainnie's barn, when a party of dragoons surrounded the house, and inquired if there were any strangers lodging there at the time, when they were told there was only an old beggar man lying in the barn. They got a lantern, went to the barn, questioned Lord Pitligo, and examined every part of his dress minutely, when, finding nothing inconsistent with the

character he had assumed, they ordered him to carry the lantern for them till they further examined all the premises; and then, having satisfied themselves that the object of their search was not concealed there, they went away, giving him a shilling for his trouble.

One of the narrowest escapes which he made from discovery, when met in his mendicant's dress by those who were in search of him, was attended with circumstances which make the adventure singularly romantic and interesting. At that time there lived in the district of the country, a fool called Sandy Annand, a well-known character. The kindly feelings of the peasantry of Scotland to persons of weak intellect, are well known, and are strongly marked by the name of the *innocent*, which is given to them. They are generally harmless creatures, contented with the enjoyment of the sun and air as their highest luxuries, and privileged to the hospitality of every house, so far as their humble wants require. There is often, too, a mixture of shrewdness with their folly, and they are always singularly attached to those who are kind to them. Lord Pitaligo, disguised as usual, had gone into a house where the fool happened to be at the time. He immediately recognised him, and did not restrain his feelings, as others did in the same situation, but was busily employed in shewing his respect for his Lordship, in his own peculiar and grotesque manner, expressing his great grief at seeing him in such a fallen state, when a party entered the house to search for him. They asked the fool who was the person that he was thus lamenting. What a moment of intense anxiety both to Lord Pitaligo and the inmates of the house! It was impossible to expect any other answer from the poor weak creature, but one which would betray the unfortunate nobleman. Sandy, however, with that shrewdness which men of his intel-

lects often exhibit on the most trying occasions, said, "He kent him aince a muckle farmer, but his sheep a' deed in the 40." It was looked upon as a special interposition of Providence, which put such an answer into the mouth of the fool.

The year 1740 had been a very bad and unproductive year, and the people in the high grounds especially were reduced to great distress. The rent of that part of the Pitaligo estate which lay on the coast near Fraserburgh, was chiefly paid in *bear* (a species of barley), all which, Lord Pitaligo's charitable hand, ever open to relieve distress, distributed among his own tenants in the muirs, as well as to the poorest people on other estates. The poor fool probably had not been forgotten on this occasion. May not this be regarded as a proof of the justice of the wise man's advice, even as to the affairs of this world, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for *thou knowest not what evil shall be on the earth.*" In the year 1740, little did Lord Pitsligo anticipate that, in a few years, he would be a proscribed and houseless stranger in his own country, and indebted for his personal safety to such an incident as this.

Lord Pitsligo was attainted of high treason, and in 1746 his estate was surveyed and seized by the Crown. He endeavoured to obtain a reversal of his attainder, and a restoration of his estate, in consequence of a misnomer in the act of attainder; and the ultimate disappointment of his hopes was rendered more acutely severe, that his plea had been successful in the Court of Session, but the judgment in his favour was reversed by the House of Lords.*

Lord Pitsligo thus found himself proscribed, his

* 1st Feb. 1751, Craigie and Stewart's Reports, p. 462.

estates forfeited, his family degraded, his earthly prospects ruined, his life at the mercy of any informer. His age and infirmities precluded his again becoming an exile, and loudly called for the care and attention of friendship. His resolution had already been taken, that he would live or die with his own people. He accordingly assumed the name of Brown, never went abroad but in disguise, and after living for some time with different friends for the sake of avoiding detection, latterly, and for a good many years before his death, resided constantly at the house of Auchiries, into which family his only son had married; who, however, brought nothing to it, but the wreck of his fortune, and the lustre of his father's virtues. Whenever strangers were in the house, Lord Pitligo kept himself confined to his own room. His serenity of mind, and cheerfulness of temper, however, never forsook him; and his composure and resignation, with regard to whatever might befall him, gave him more the appearance of a comforter, than of requiring consolation from others.

No better proof can be given of the temper with which he bore his misfortunes, than his familiar correspondence with his intimate friends. Among these was Miss Fergusson, a sister of his friend Lord Pitfour, with whom he seems to have lived on terms of the warmest friendship. Of this feeling his heart was deeply sensible, for it is his own recorded sentiment, "It is a pleasure to acquire knowledge, and more pleasure to acquire friendship."* The portraiture of his mind is happily displayed in the following letter, which seems to have been written about the year 1750.

"DEAR MADAM,

August. 17.

"I received your obliging letter by H. D., and am

* *Man's Duties and Hopes.*

glad of this opportunity of sending this bit of paper, for it does not deserve the name of a letter. I have no news to write, and you know all my sentiments on all kinds of subjects. I am almost at the end of M. Guion's Justifications, a most valuable collection of Authorities, besides what she says herself here and there. I think I am nothing the worse of that task, and I wish I may may not have reason to say *as little the better*. I really shun too much reflecting on myself; and when other people come into my mind, I study to view them on their best sides. If Monsters of Injustice and Cruelty cast up, I turn my eyes from them as fast as I can, heartily wishing their conversion, in order to their own Happiness, as well as for the Good of the Society. By this means, I thank God, I am in a tolerable quiet, and for my health it is surprising *a mon age*. I wish your's and the bearer's were as good. I design ere long to have the pleasure of seeing you; still wishing you the utmost Happiness, D. M. Adieu."

The following letter appears to have been written before the judgment of the Court of Session was given as to the reversal of the attainder. It contains further allusions to the mystic writers, for whose works Miss Fergusson had acquired a taste, probably from her amiable correspondent; but the letter shews at the same time that his admiration of them was chastened by good sense and the soberness of a true Christian.

"DEAR MADAM,

"I am sorry your Health is not so good as mine, but every thing we suffer is best for us, and it may be said of things agreeable that they are best for us too when we get them, I mean as to the intention of the Infinite

Goodness, Who bestows them. But my observations are so common, that I no sooner put them down than I am ashamed of them, and, therefore, I shall turn to M. Marsay. I hope he is not to be called positive, in the common acceptation of Positiveness, which is the effect of Pride: if he thinks his Lights are from Heaven, there is no help for it, he must speak with an air of Assurance, and, at the same time, may be the humblest Man in the World. I shall look again at that account he gives of the modern Inspirations. I remember M. Guion says, *Evitez l'extraordinaire*. No limits are indeed to be set to Infinite Wisdom. It may doubtless instruct by means of the outward senses, which may be called canals for Reflection or Reasoning, as Frère Laurent was struck with the sight of a Tree in Winter; or it may act immediately, without the intervention of the lower faculties: in short, there must be an internal Teacher, by whose power likewise bad dispositions will be removed; for we can do little else than consent and keep out of the way of hurtful occasions. But I am saying nothing again. I shall look at that Book (perhaps the whole of it,) and then write a few lines out of it as a Memorandum for myself, and which I shall send you, not taking the least notice to any person of what you do not wish to be mentioned. I imagine John* may have the pleasure of seeing you this week, unless they keep him a few days at Putachy and Castle Forbes. According to the old proverb, Delays are dangerous, but his returning uncertain about his small affairs creates me no great anxiety. What Providence allots for him in this poor life he'll certainly get. Your Brother's friendship and genius would perhaps design

* His only son, who died in 1782.

too much.* I was glad to see poor Babie last week, but was mortified not to see you. Dr Seton's bad health has hindered him from going to Pitfour.

"D. M. Adieu."

The following letter seems to have been written after the question was decided in the Court of Session, and while the fate of the Appeal was still uncertain.

"DEAR MADAM,

"I am loaded with your civilities and friendship; but the load is very agreeable, only I am ashamed to have so many of your letters lying by me unanswered, nor can I write much at this time, because of hindering your Bearer. I really delayed writing these two weeks past, just because I had nothing to say, but was to have sent next Monday at all adventures. I have returned the little Note under W. F.'s hand, and the other under J. S.'s, with the two letters from John. I shall take care not to be uppish, especially as the affair is still uncertain. If Juliana's words be true, as I hope they are, our Fate is too happy, whatever come of the things of this world. Please tell Mrs. F. her letter pleased me much. A severe cold has been for some time hereabout: I have stood it out pretty well; but it continues hard upon my wife. She is very much your servant.

"D. M. Adieu."

Such a character as we have described, could not fail to be endeared to all ranks; and the kindly feelings

* The allusion here is plainly to the depending process before the Court, for reducing the forfeiture of his estate, which the heavenly-minded writer looks upon solely as the concern of his son. Miss Fergusson's brother was then the eminent counsel at the bar, who, in 1764, was raised to the Bench under the title of Lord Pitfour, and who was leading counsel for Lord Pitaligo in this process.

towards him increased with his misfortunes ; the hope which these misfortunes inspired, that it might be in their power to be of use, increasing the desire of befriending him. Those, whose duty did not call upon them to deliver him up to government, frustrated, where they could, the danger he ran ; and even those whose unpleasant task it was to search for him, sometimes tried to reconcile humanity and duty, when it could be done with safety.

An excise officer having received information that some contraband goods were concealed about the house of Auchiries, came early one morning with an assistant, to make a search : but being unwilling to disturb the family, he proposed to wait till the door should be opened, before he entered the house. The morning being cold, he took shelter in the coach-house, which he found open, and shut himself into the carriage, inviting his assistant to follow his example. This he declined, being either more eager in the search, or not entering into his superior's notions of delicacy towards the family ; and he kept prowling about in pursuit of the object of their early visit. He came back in a short time with breathless eagerness, and said he had found a richer prize than they were in search of, as he had discovered that Lord Pitsligo was at that moment in the house. The excise officer instantly sprung upon him, threw him down, and with a pistol at his breast, made him take a most solemn oath, binding himself never to mention the circumstance during Lord Pitsligo's life. Respect for the virtues of the proscribed nobleman made the officer forego the reward which such a discovery would have secured to him from the favour of his superiors.

On another occasion, information having been given to the commanding officer at Fraserburgh that Lord Pitsligo was at that moment in concealment in Pitsligo Castle, he called on a respectable inhabitant of the

town, the father of Mr Fraser, late minister of the parish of Tyrie, and professing a desire to see his flowers, begged to be shown into his garden. After taking a turn or two in it, and admiring the flowers, he in a casual way remarked, that he could remain no longer at that time, as he had received information that Lord Pitsligo was at the Castle, and that he was just going with a party of soldiers to search for him. As may be anticipated, notice was immediately sent, and the search proved fruitless.

Only one other adventure of a similar nature shall be related; but it was attended with circumstances which made a deep impression at the time, and which were long narrated by some of the actors in it, with those feelings of awe which the notion of an approach even to the supernatural never fails to produce.

In March 1756, and of course long after all apprehension of a search had ceased, information having been given to the then commanding officer at Fraserburgh, that Lord Pitsligo was at that moment in the house of Auchiries, it was acted upon with so much promptness and secrecy, that the search must have proved successful, but for a very singular occurrence. Mrs. Sophia Donaldson, a lady who lived much with the family, repeatedly dreamt on that particular night, that the house was surrounded by soldiers. Her mind became so haunted with the idea, that she got out of bed, and was walking through the room in hopes of giving a different current to her thoughts before she lay down again: when day beginning to dawn, she accidentally looked out at the window as she passed it in traversing the room, and was astonished at actually observing the figures of soldiers among some trees near the house. So completely had all idea of a search been by that time laid asleep, that she supposed they had

come to steal poultry, Jacobite poultry-yards affording a safe object of pillage for the English soldiers in those days. Under this impression Mrs Sophia was proceeding to rouse the servants, when her sister having awaked, and inquiring what was the matter, and being told of soldiers near the house, exclaimed, in great alarm, that she feared they wanted something more than hens. She begged Mrs Sophia to look out at a window on the other side of the house, when not only soldiers were seen in that direction, but also an officer giving instructions by signals, and frequently putting his fingers on his lips, as if enjoining silence. There was now no time to be lost in rousing the family, and all the haste that could be made was scarcely sufficient to hurry the venerable man from his bed, into a small recess behind the wainscot of an adjoining room, which was concealed by a bed, in which a Lady, Miss Gordon of Towie, who was there on a visit, lay, before the soldiers obtained admission. A most minute search took place. The room in which Lord Pitsligo was concealed did not escape: Miss Gordon's bed was carefully examined, and she was obliged to suffer the rude scrutiny of one of the party, by feeling her chin, to ascertain that it was not a man in a lady's night-dress. Before the soldiers had finished their examination in this room, the confinement and anxiety increased Lord Pitsligo's asthma so much, and his breathing became so loud, that it obliged Miss Gordon, lying in bed, to counterfeit and continue a violent coughing, in order to prevent the high breathings behind the wainscot from being heard. It may easily be conceived what agony she would suffer, lest, by overdoing her part, she should increase suspicion, and in fact lead to a discovery. The *ruse* was fortunately successful. On the search through the house being given over, Lord Pitsligo was hastily taken from his

confined situation, and again replaced in bed; and as soon as he was able to speak, his accustomed kindness of heart made him say to his servant, "James, go and see that these poor fellows get some breakfast, and a drink of warm ale, for this is a cold morning; they are only doing their duty, and cannot bear me any ill-will." When the family were felicitating each other on his escape, he pleasantly observed, "A poor prize had they obtained it—an old dying man!" That the friends who lived in the house,—the hourly witnesses of his virtues, and the objects of his regard, who saw him escape all the dangers that surrounded him, should reckon him the peculiar care of Providence, is not to be wondered at; and that the dream which was so opportune, as the means of preventing his apprehension, and probably of saving his life, was supposed by some of them at least to be a special interposition of Heaven's protecting shield against his enemies, need not excite surprise. This was accordingly the belief of more than one to their dying hour.

Some of these anecdotes may be thought trifling, nay, perhaps some fastidious tastes may think that they and the disguise which led to them correspond ill with the dignified deportment of a high-born noble. But we are persuaded this will not be the general opinion; on the contrary, that they serve to illustrate the character of this excellent man, in a more striking manner than the most minute and laboured description. They exhibit the noble spectacle of a brave and high-minded man, of unblemished manners and benevolent heart, suffering every privation with cheerfulness, endeavouring, by means of hair-breadth escapes, and the most singular sufferings, to avoid the penal consequences of a political error, which, in his view, was identified with virtuous feeling and unshaken loyalty; yet, in every moment of

trial and difficulty, preserving the most perfect composure, and in seasons of reflection the most resigned contentment and even gaiety of heart, founded solely on a sense of having discharged the duty he thought he owed to his king, and leaving the event, so far as regarded himself and his concerns, to that overruling Providence, on Whom was all his reliance, and Whereon he rested all his hopes. He was fully persuaded that nothing could befall him without the permission of Infinite Goodness; and this devout contemplation, together with the deep conviction which was ever before his eyes upon how frail a tenure he held his life, seems entirely to have subdued in him the fear of death; so that, while he felt it his duty to avoid rushing upon it with the ill-regulated zeal of a voluntary Martyr, he, at the same time, could look it calmly in the face; and while his soul was always in his hand ready to be yielded up when required, he could wait with patience and resignation God's appointed season, whether the events and trials of time through which he was passing, should lead to the sacrifice of his life on a scaffold, or leave him to resign his breath in the ordinary course of nature.

Lord Pitsligo was not one who judged of the merit of human motives or actions by their success: nor, after he had taken any step from a sense of duty, would regret having done so, because the event proved unfortunate. He acted upon much higher motives; hence, he never at any after period of his life regretted the sacrifice which his patriotism and his loyalty had cost him. Writing to a friend several years afterwards, regarding his motives for going out, as it was called, in the year 1745, he mentions, that his first consideration was, as to the morality of resisting a settled government; having satisfied himself about the lawfulness of doing so in this case, as the government was founded on wrong, and was by no

means supported by general consent, he explains his motives to have been his attachment to the exiled family, the head of which he considered his rightful sovereign; and a patriotic desire to relieve his country from an unlawful and corrupt government, swayed by German interests and foreign manners; and finally, he disclaims feeling any regret at what he had done. Among other things, he says, "I was grown a little old, and the fear of ridicule stuck to me pretty much. I have mentioned the weightier considerations of a family, which would make the censure still the greater, and set the more tongues agoing. But we are pushed on, I know not how,—I thought,—I weighed,—and I weighed again. If there was any enthusiasm in it, it was of the coldest kind; *and there was as little remorse when the affair miscarried*, as there was eagerness at the beginning." Indeed, nothing but a sense of having done what he conceived to be his duty, could have kept him in the same uniformly placid and cheerful state of mind during his misfortunes, which he had enjoyed in comparatively more prosperous times. In the same letter, he says, "When I heard of the attainder, I was not in the least surprised at it; only I knew not why those should be called *traitors*, who had betrayed no trust, nor discovered any secrets. But it is the way of men in power to give names, in order to justify their severity; and I was heartily sorry to hear that such a number of persons had so deeply felt the effects of it. For my share, I can never be enough thankful to Providence for the safety and quiet I had, when others knew not where to lay their heads. The remarkable instances of friendship gave a greater relish to the safety." Though deprived of his estates, and obliged to keep himself concealed under a disguise and assumed name, like a felon, gratitude to Providence was the prevailing feeling of his mind, because he was not

called to suffer the utmost extremity which human laws could have inflicted: and the edifying lesson which he drew from the disappointment of his excited hopes, is feelingly told where he proceeds to say, "Our philosophy is never readier to give us the slip, than when we think we have the fastest hold of her. I was pretty well fortified against the worst consequences of the attainder; and the horrors of a scaffold were very seldom in my view. When there was a prospect of being saved by a misnomer, I found myself still better pleased on several accounts; and when the decree was pronounced by the Court of Session, I began to fancy I was going about openly visiting my neighbours, and receiving their visits at my own house." He then mentioned his feelings, on the disappointment of his prospects, by the judgment of the House of Lords; "My error, in this turn of fortune (as we call it) was the not taking the disappointment immediately from Heaven, instead of looking at second causes. For men are but the instruments which Providence makes use of for our correction, that is, for our amendment; and sometimes men answer that design pretty well towards one another, though instruments have little merit to plead in their behalf. I did not look on the Peers with any ill-will or hatred, I protest, but, I confess, with a good deal of contempt (which is far from a Christian spirit); though I gave them no ill names, I was content how many they got from others.

"This disposition did by no means raise me in my own opinion; I was rather ashamed to have made so bad an improvement of what Providence intended or permitted (it is difficult to know which of the two words is fittest) for making me wiser and better. Indeed, the cross event gave me occasion to look back upon my long and ill spent life." It was thus that the humility and tender conscience of this excellent man characterised a life, which by

all was considered as a model of piety and goodness. "I could not but own I had ate, and drunk, and laughed enough, every thing beyond the rules of temperance ; so I could not complain, but had reason to be thankful, to find myself put under restraint for the future." These errors were at least not solitary vices, the gratifications of selfish passion : they were the failings of a cheerful and social disposition, attaching him to his friends, and making him happy in their company ; yet he declares himself not merely resigned, but thankful even, for the necessity which obliged him for the future to restrain all his desires and pleasures within the most rigid bounds of moderation.

Although politically attached to the exiled family, Lord Pitsligo was a sincere Protestant ; and being well versed in ecclesiastical antiquities, was a conscientious member of the Episcopal Church, which exhibited, as he conceived, in the doctrine and discipline adopted by the branch of it in this country, a nearer approach to the primitive model, than the confession of faith and form of church government established at the Revolution. The doctrines of divine love, and the contemplation of the divine perfections, which he derived from the writings of the Mystics, only served to spiritualise his devotions and animate his practice, and made him more regular, as a member of the Church, in observing the externals of religion, and those divine institutions ordained by the Author of our faith, as the means of our salvation. He had for some time, as a member of his household, in the capacity of domestic chaplain, and as private tutor to his son, a Mr Allan, who afterwards became Episcopal minister at Huntly, and who was the author of the catechism printed at the end of the former edition of *The Thoughts*. But after his return from the Continent, and prior to 1745, he always attended the chapel in

Fraserburgh; and those are yet alive, who have heard it remarked by the old people, that his appearance and deportment, during public worship, and more particularly during the participation of the blessed eucharist,* so humble and reverentially devout, and so unostentatiously sincere—affected the whole congregation, and seemed sympathetically to warm and animate their devotion.

After the year 1745, the Episcopal communion in this country was proscribed and put down by public authority. The severity of these laws, which inflicted fines, imprisonment, and banishment, after the few first years of vigorous enforcement, defeated their purpose. They were evaded, and the evasion was winked at. Lord Pitligo, when living in concealment, of course could not appear publicly in the chapel, when again opened in Fraserburgh. But the prayers of the Church were regularly read by one of the family at Auchiries; and the occasional visits of the Episcopal clergyman supplied the more solemn service of the Church, which was thus privately administered and partaken, perhaps not with the less fervour and devotion, that, in these circumstances attending its celebration, it also somewhat resembled in their eyes the celebration of this rite in the Apostolic times.

Though thus sincerely attached to his own communion, he avoided in himself, and duly reprobated in others, any unkindliness of feeling towards those of an opposite form or system. If they were sincere, and their views sanctioned by a previous inquiry into the grounds of their faith, they were entitled to and met with his respect; and even where, as is so often the case, "it is accident that makes us of one religion rather than another, as being either the religion of our parents, or

* We give the words of our venerable correspondent at Fraserburgh.

the religion of the times, and where our parents seem to have been determined the same way as we are ;” * his opinion was, that this should awaken quite other feelings than those which divide mankind, or make them hostile to each other. It is not religion, but the want of it, and an ill-founded zeal without the knowledge which enlightens, that produces such unpropitious fruits, so different from the charity of the Gospel.

The devotional state of his feelings was habitual, and was the foundation of that cheerfulness of temper, which distinguished him under all circumstances. Although he would have avoided to talk of religion in mixed companies, which no tie of friendship, or other such bond, united together, “lest it should be thought *cant*, which, indeed, is very much to be shunned ;” yet, when surrounded by true friends, who had a relish for pious conversation, and knowing how very useful they might be to one another, by awakening suitable and improving reflections on the passing events of life, † his conversation was ever tinged with the expression of his own grateful and pious heart ; ‡ and his conduct in the various scenes of his eventful life, must have powerfully enforced every reflection or observation he made, bringing it home to the hearts and consciences of those who heard him. For he could scarcely recommend a duty which he had not been called upon to practise. If he drew the attention of his willing listeners to the goodness of God

* *Essays, Moral and Philosophical*, p. 146, 164.

† *Thoughts on Man's Hopes and Duties*, chap. 15.

‡ His firm belief in an overruling Providence, and entire reliance upon the Divine goodness in every event of life, made him object to some of the common expressions used, by men, in speaking of familiar occurrences, without perhaps attaching to them the meaning which gave him offence. As an instance of this, it is mentioned, that being one day in his garden at Pitsligo, and the gardener remarking that it threatened rain, Lord Pitsligo reproved him for using the term *threaten*, observing that he ought rather to say, it promised rain.

in all His dispensations, his own devout acknowledgment and deep-felt gratitude for mercies, afforded the best comment on his words ;—if he enlarged on the pleasures of a religious life, and the raptures of a devotional heart, his own incessant prayers and holy meditation shewed that he fully felt the delightful truth ;—if he spoke of patience in suffering, and of drawing consolation under afflictions from the only source whence the wounded spirit can derive it ; the resigned, nay, cheerful composure with which he had submitted to the adverse circumstances of his lot, was a practical illustration of the lesson ;—if he dwelt on the happiness which springs from benevolence and charitable feelings for all mankind, his own habitual serenity, and the peaceful joy, which illuminated his countenance, proclaimed more feelingly than the most eloquent language, the satisfaction which attends the exercise of the kindly affections.

Lord Pitaligo exhibited a striking illustration of the remark, that there is a close resemblance between a good and a well-bred character. With the advantage of a graceful person and engaging countenance, manners dignified yet easy, formed on the best models, and polished by the society of the court of Louis XIV, with that benevolence and complacence towards others, and disregard of self, which the temper of his mind, and the religious discipline he practised, could not fail to produce ; he exhibited all the qualities of good breeding in his intercourse with his equals ; while, with the common people he was ever condescending, and entertained kindly feelings even to the meanest. The little accidents of life never discomposed him ; and even in the most trying situations of his chequered lot, he exhibited a picture of calmness and unruffled temper, which could alone be inspired by his habitual reliance on Divine Providence, and his habitual contemplation of the Divine goodness.

On the great subjects of morality and religion, as he read and thought much, so he occupied many a moment of his privacy in committing his views to writing, aiming at becoming one day the instructor of his countrymen. He wrote, about the year 1732, a small volume, entitled **ESSAYS MORAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL**, which shew that he was well acquainted with the philosophical and ethical writers, both ancient and modern. He treats of man and his faculties with considerable acuteness; his speculations all tend to practice, and his views and systems are ever founded on the truths of revelation. He makes frequent and apt quotations from the classic authors of Greece and Rome, and writes in an easy correct style, formed on the best models of composition which the classic age of Queen Anne produced. He also occupied his latter years in composing his **THOUGHTS ON MAN'S DUTIES AND HOPES**, bequeathing them to posterity, as a testimony of his faith,—the result of the meditations of a long life, and as a manual of practice for those who might neither have time nor inclination to study longer and more profound or professional treatises.

Lord Pitsligo continued to live in a retired, unobtrusive, and inoffensive manner, and after some time seemed overlooked, at all events was unmolested by government. He now resided constantly at the house of Auchiries, enjoying the affection and kind attention of the family and of those friends, whom a similarity of views and sentiments, political and religious, endeared to him, preparing for the termination of his earthly career, with humble hope and firm reliance on his Redeemer's merits, "thinking of death, as what it is, viz. a release from a painful life, and the end of a tedious journey,"* and as preparatory to an entrance into glory. At this period of

* *Thoughts*, chap. 6.

his life he thus writes to a friend. "I shall ever wish to believe the plain literal history of our Saviour's sufferings, written by the four Evangelists, taking along St Peter's words, *the Just for the unjust*. I never durst enter into the dispute about the necessity of our Saviour's sufferings (the greatest that ever were,) for our redemption. The question is too awful, as well as too intricate. I am afraid even of *blasphemy in thinking*, so to say, should I attempt to penetrate what is above the comprehension of men, and probably of Angels. What I would wish to do is, to adore with thankfulness and quietness of heart, seeking no more discoveries than may tend to awaken love, to which we have abundance of incitements in the Scriptures of truth. We are all going I hope to a good place. I keep pretty free of dread as to anything I may suffer either before my departure, or admittance into a state of happiness. It seems to be a thought worthy of the Father Almighty, as well as for the comfort of poor mortals, that all manner of suffering is in order to purification; though this comfort is not always at our command."

In this happy frame of mind,—calm and full of hope,—the saintly man continued to the last, with his reason unclouded, able to study his favourite volume, enjoying the comforts of friendship, and delighting in the consolations of religion, till he gently "fell asleep" in Jesus. He died on the 21st of December 1762, in the 85th year of his age; and to his surviving friends, the recollection of the misfortunes which had accompanied him through his long life, was painfully awakened even in the closing scene of his mortal career; as his son had the mortification to be indebted to a stranger, now the proprietor of his ancient inheritance by purchase from the Crown, for permission to lay his Father's honoured remains in the vault which contained the ashes of his family for many generations.

Lord Pitaligo was twice married; first, to Miss Norton, an English lady, by whom he had one child, the Master of Pitsligo; and, secondly, to Miss Allen, who had come to Scotland as the friend and companion of the first Lady Pitaligo.

Mr Forbes of Pitaligo having died in 1782 without issue, was succeeded in the small remnant of his family estate, which he had reacquired, by Sir William Forbes of Monymusk, as his nearest heir (his grandmother having been Lord Pitaligo's only sister), who thereafter assumed the designation of Pitsligo, and obtained a grant of the arms of that family. Sir John Stuaat Forbes, Bart. of Pitsligo, is now the representative of the subject of this Memoir.

The following notice of this little work of Lord Pitaligo's, with a sketch of his life and character, is contained in Letters from a Father to his Son, which still remain in manuscript, which it has been thought best to give here without abridgment, even at the risk of repeating some of the details in the preceding pages.

“‘THOUGHTS CONCERNING MAN'S DUTIES AND HOPES,’ by the late Lord Pitaligo, whose many virtues conferred on him a degree of lustre superior to that which he derived from a coronet. By a classical and refined taste in polite literature, by his elegant and polished manners, which ever mark the accomplished gentleman, he was qualified to shine in and adorn a court; yet, equally uniform in genuine piety and native goodness, the simplicity of his unblemished life would have done honour to the purest ages of primitive Christianity. On entering the world at an early age, he found his paternal inheritance greatly diminished, and involved in much

embarrassment, from which, with invincible perseverance and inflexible integrity, he happily disengaged it; and with a revenue so slender, as would scarcely appear to place a man of rank and title above a state of indigence, when viewed in comparison with the extravagancies of modern luxury, he not only supported with a becoming dignity the duties of his station, but he was even enabled to indulge the feelings of a benevolent heart, by a judicious liberality, to merit in distress. But the most distinguished feature of his character, was a mild and gentle spirit, which never forsook him, even in the most trying situations of life. For when intestine commotions, in which his principles led him to take an active and steady part, were desolating our country,—when he perceived the total ruin of the public cause in which he had engaged, and saw his only son involved in the consequent wreck of his honours and fortune,—when he beheld his best and dearest friends doomed to exile, imprisonment, and death,—and when, broken with years and infirmities, he found it difficult to escape from military pursuit, all could not ruffle the serenity of his unbroken spirit; but, with pious resignation, and an humble yet well-pleased confidence in the protection of his God, he calmly awaited the event without murmur or complaint.

“It pleased Heaven to extend his days to a more than common length, till at last, with the full possession of his mental powers, his lamp of life went gently out, without a struggle or an effort, as if the consequence merely of totally exhausted nature. Justly might be applied to him those beautiful lines of an excellent moral painter :

“Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way,
And all his prospects brightening to the last,
His Heaven commencing ere this world be past.

"This small publication, which, to an inattentive reader, may seem scarcely worthy of a man of taste and letters, when considered in the view with which the pious author wrote it—the information of those who have neither time nor money to bestow on more expensive books—strongly marks the genuine character of this excellent man, whose innate benevolence and unaffected piety led him to compassionate the ignorant and helpless situation, in regard to religious instruction, of the lower ranks of people. He therefore composed this little tract with a plainness and perspicuity which might be level to the capacity of the meanest, yet not unworthy the notice of the best informed.

"As a proof that I have not exaggerated the virtues of this excellent man, I need only refer you to the following testimony of the anonymous author of the *Critical Review*, in giving an account of this performance of Lord Pitsligo's, of which I am now speaking.

"'Few men ever passed through life with a more irreproachable private character, than the noble Author of the work now before us. In his political capacity, he was possessed of unhappy but unshaken principles, to which he sacrificed the prime, as well as the decline of his days. In religion, he lived and died a firm Protestant; but when young, he became the acquaintance, the friend, and, as the reader will see by this treatise, the disciple of the amiable Fenelon, whom he resembled in his prepossessions, as well as his genius and virtues. The work is posthumous, but undoubtedly genuine; and we need say no more to recommend it to the curiosity of the public.'

"To this I am happy to add the following fragment of a character of Lord Pitsligo by that excellent poet, the late Mr Hamilton of Bangour, who had known him intimately, particularly during the progress of that

unfortunate expedition in which they were jointly engaged in the year 1745. It does not appear ever to have been finished, and still remains in MS. in the hands of a friend of Mr Hamilton's, who favoured me with the copy.

“ ‘ When Lord Pitsligo heard that the Prince was advancing to Edinburgh at their head,* this noble person thought himself on this occasion obliged to resume the courage of his youth, and once more to appear in arms for that cause he had so gallantly asserted in the year 1715. Though his great advanced age, being then entered into his seventieth year, might well have excused him from becoming active at this time; and though he might, without a blush, have left the interests of the king and kingdom to younger courage, yet, when he reflected that so many gentlemen of honour and consequence had pitched on him for their leader, he did not think any reason whatever sufficient to exempt him from what is the duty of every age and every station of life, but seemed to him now a superior obligation, since the piety he owed to his country, was now happily become united to the gratitude he owed his friends: nor could any thing have fallen out more fortunately for the Prince, than his joining them did; for it seemed as if Religion, Virtue, and Justice were entering his camp, under the appearance of this venerable old man; and what would have given sanction to a cause of the most dubious right, could not fail to render sacred the very best.

“ ‘ As the author of these Memoirs had the peculiar felicity to pass the course of this calamitous season in a near attendance on this excellent person, it may be expected that he should endeavour to transmit to pos-

* The Highland Army in 1745.

‘terity (if these reflections may be supposed to have
‘the good fortune to reach it) some character of him;
‘which he does with the greater willingness, as he hopes
‘it may be of use in an age when the current of bad
‘example, and a certain fashionable ridicule of religion
‘and public virtue seem to have affected all conditions
‘and sorts of men; the good will find in it a noble
‘pattern and authority to confirm them in the choice
‘they have made; and others who have been misled,
‘may be reclaimed to a juster sense of things.’ Thus
ends this unfinished sketch.”

The very imperfect manner in which, at this distance of time, the attempt to delineate the character of this good man has now been accomplished, must leave upon the mind never-ceasing regret, that one so well qualified for the task was prevented from executing it; more especially as another writer, also personally acquainted with the original, has delineated one feature of his disposition in such colours as to show what the world has lost, in not having a faithful and contemporary portrait of his whole character. Dr King, the Principal of S. Mary’s Hall, Oxford, had known Lord Pitsligo in early life, and the amiableness of his disposition seems to have made a deep impression upon him. Writing in his seventy-first year, he observes. ‘Whoever is so happy either from his natural disposition, or his good judgment, constantly to observe St. Paul’s precept, *To speak evil of no one*, will certainly acquire the love and esteem of the whole community of which he is a member. But such a man is the *rara avis in terris*; and among all my acquaintance, I have known only one person to whom I can with truth assign this character. The person I mean is the present Lord Pitsligo of Scotland. I not only never heard this gentleman speak an ill word of any man living, but I always observed him ready to defend

any other person who was ill-spoken of in his company. If the person accused were of his acquaintance, my Lord Pitsligo would always find something good to say of him as a counterpoise. If he were a stranger, and quite unknown to him, my lord would urge in his defence the general corruption of manners, and the frailties and infirmities of human nature.

“ ‘It is no wonder that such an excellent man, who besides, is a polite scholar, and has many other great and good qualities, should be universally admired and beloved, insomuch, that I persuade myself he has not one enemy in the world. At least, to this general esteem and affection for his person, his preservation must be owing; for since his attainder, he has never removed far from his own house, protected by men of different principles, and unsought for and unmolested by the government.’ * ”

The foundation of this amiable feature in the character of Lord Pitsligo, was the love which Christianity taught him to bear to all mankind, and the knowledge he had of the weakness of our fallen nature. His views were similar to those which called forth the following admirable sentiments from one who was also a faithful adherent of the family of Stuart, but more fortunate in his attachment to them. ‘Let us, with that affection and charity which becomes the servants of one Master, and the children of one Father, be indulgent to one another’s infirmities, and compassionate to one another’s failings. This is the way to make ‘the earth yield her increase,’ such an increase as God takes delight in,—an increase of Christian conversation, of brotherly affection, of knowledge, of humility, of justice, and of charity, and of all those graces which will prevail with Him to shower

* Anecdotes of his own Times, by Dr King, p 143.

down all temporal blessings in this world, and to afford an assurance of eternal joy in the world that is to come.' * "

This sketch cannot be more appropriately concluded, than in the words of our correspondent, formerly alluded to, who, although himself not personally acquainted with Lord Pitsligo, knew his character well from the information of those who were. He thus writes of him: "To him God was ALL, and the whole creation in itself, and of itself considered, was nothing. What a comfort it is to think that such heaven-lighted lamps shall never be extinguished; they are only moved from the anti-chamber into the inner court of the King Immortal, where they shine more and more; waiting for the arrival of those whom they left behind, that all, in one glorious constellation, may attain perfect splendour."

* Lord Clarendon's Observations on the Psalms,

THOUGHTS &c.



THOUGHTS

CONCERNING

MAN'S DUTIES AND HOPES,

CHAPTER I.

THE ADVANTAGE OF THINKING SERIOUSLY ON OUR
CONDITION.

"MAN that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down : he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." *—" Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." † Our own experience teaches us the same truths ; but as we know them only in a confused manner, so we think very little about them. Our short time passes away in folly, till we are surprised by death. Several causes may be given for this thoughtlessness. Our heart is almost continually intent upon some pleasure or diversion, and our head taken up with airy projects : or, if we find ourselves sometimes a little disengaged, and in a disposition to think of our true state, and the great end of our creation, we are presently discouraged with gloomy prospects, and the misery that rests up to us.

No doubt we are poor and miserable : but this should

* Job xiv. 1, 2.

† psalm xxxix. 5.

not hinder us from considering the whole of our condition, since we pretend to be reasonable creatures, and often to be very wise.

A little consideration might shew us, that we are not miserable beyond hope of recovery. Very few are altogether without some expectation of happiness in the next world, after this *painful life* is ended; and if we give attention to the Scripture we shall find many passages to confirm our hopes. The same holy person, Job, says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth." He adds, "And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."* Here is a glorious expectation of deliverance, and of the resurrection. Our blessed Saviour and His apostles give that doctrine still a greater force.

Mankind, therefore, should not be without hopes; but their confidence should be only in their Redeemer. For, alas! what miserable creatures are we!

We cannot think too meanly of ourselves, as we are fallen creatures, and so wretchedly disfigured by sin. But lest the dwelling too much upon this thought should cast us into despair, we must think of the mercy and power of God Who can renew us, body and soul. He can "create in us a clean heart," and "change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."†

We were created at first "after the image of God." Who could believe this considering what we are now? But the Scripture declares it, and that is enough. We even find in our present state something that looks like great about us. We abhor to be thought capable of base actions. We aim at a good character before men.

* Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

† Phil. iii. 21.

Again, nothing in this world can fully satisfy our hearts, which looks as if they were made for the enjoyment of God, since nothing less than He can fill them. And the abhorrence of being thought base, looks like some remains of dignity in our nature. When a person has no sense of shame, there is nothing that is good to be expected from him.

But as we are *high* in some respects, we are very *low* in others. These are two points which we must constantly keep in view, that we may not either be proud like the devil, or level ourselves with the beasts.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF OURSELVES, AND THE STATE OF THINGS, ONLY TO BE HAD FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

EXPERIENCE may teach us somewhat, but the Scriptures only can teach us fully and truly. We must read attentively, otherwise it does not deserve the name of reading. Another thing requisite for understanding the Scriptures, is *an honest heart*: we must bring with us a sincere intention of doing our duty, as soon as we understand it; without which we only cheat ourselves.

We must not read that we may flatter our vanity, or to appear knowing. The end of our reading, and of all our actions, must be to please God, and to give glory to His name.

If we read the Holy Scriptures with these good dispositions, or a right frame of heart, we shall learn out of them all that is necessary to make us perfectly happy in the next world, and even much happier here than otherwise we could be: for the Scriptures have come from

the Spirit of God, the fountain of all wisdom. There may be very useful books written by good men, but they are only borrowed lights, and dim in comparison of the Scriptures.

When we open those sacred books, we should put up a private petition to Almighty God, "That He would give us the true understanding of what we read," lest we read like children. We must also pray, "That God would give us a ready heart to obey His will in all that He pleases to discover of it to us," lest we read like hypocrites.

We cannot deny that our duty is laid down plainly to us in the Scriptures; common sense is enough to let us see it. But we are for the most part in such a hurry when we read, or hear others, that all goes for nothing. Instead of minding what we read or hear, our thoughts are carried away with a thousand impertinent things. And suppose our attention were greater than it is, yet our foolish desires and passions blind us; and "the cares of the world choke the good seed," as our blessed Saviour informs us.

But I say again, our duty is plain. Our Saviour condescended to speak to the meanest capacities, and made use of the most familiar parables. His apostles teach us our duty also; and we find it in the Old Testament itself. God is never wanting upon His part.

On the other hand, we cannot deny that there are several things in the Scriptures very dark, according to our natural apprehension, and which can only be made intelligible by the same Spirit from Whence they came. But to this Spirit no bounds can be set: It can teach the soul immediately; It can explain dark passages; It can make a light to spring into the soul, without letters or sounds, or any thing that can strike the outward senses. He who formed the soul can instruct it, after many ways

and manners that human reason can have no comprehension of.

All we have to do is, to follow the light that is given us; and when God sees us fit for higher things, He will not be wanting. We ought not to aim at what is extraordinary. David said, "He did not exercise himself in things too high for him, but behaved like a weaned child."* Such high aims are liable to the punishment of delusion which they well deserve.

CHAPTER III.

OF SOME PRINCIPAL TRUTHS TAUGHT US IN HOLY WRIT.

THE Scriptures teach us our duty, plainly, fully, and truly. These three qualities cannot but concur in them, since they are the inspirations of God. They also teach us many things concerning the Divine nature and our own, the end we are made for, and the course we must follow in order to eternal happiness.

We feel the inconstancy and disorder of every thing here. Our body is a mass of corruption, and liable every moment to pain and torture in every pore and atom of it, and the whole fabric ready to fall to pieces, like a ruinous house. Our soul, though of an immortal nature, is, however, in a very poor state here: passions, imaginations, delusions, cares, sorrows, these are commonly the troublesome guests of the soul. We have not names for all the evils we feel and fear. All the elements are against us; the air we breathe often carries death in it; men are our open enemies; and "the devil walketh about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."†

* Psalm cxxxi. l. 2.

† 1 Peter v. 8.

There are other things in our present state more agreeable; pleasures of the body and mind. Hardly is any person so destitute as to have no friend; and one single friend is a great treasure.

But still man's life is full of trouble, and he is full of contradictions himself; some good qualities in him, and many bad.

It is the Scripture that shews us how these contrary things have come to pass. It informs us, that the first man *Adam* was created in an upright and happy state: but that he fell, and all his posterity in him, since he could produce none in his corruption, but corrupt creatures like himself.

It informs us, that God was pleased to pardon *Adam* and his posterity, at the intercession of *Jesus Christ*, Who took our nature upon Him, (except the sinful part of it), and satisfied the divine justice by His bitter death.*

It informs us, that though man was thus pardoned, yet he was driven out of Paradise, and the earth cursed for his sake; that being condemned to hard labour, and many vexations, he might be in less hazard of doting on his present jail, and might have his eye fixed on a better world.

It informs us, that man's knowledge was much darkened by the fall, and all his faculties distempered and poisoned; that he is now a proud, angry, foolish creature; timorous, slothful, restless; every thing by turns, and nothing for any continuance.

It informs us on the other hand, that there are great remains of dignity in our nature; that, notwithstanding all our defects and miseries, we are still the children of God, and "joint heirs with Christ." What amazing and endearing expressions!

* Man's Redemption by *Jesus Christ* is frequently mentioned in Scripture, and is one of the mysteries unfathomable by human reason.

It informs us that our title to these glorious and blessed promises is of the pure mercy of God, and only owing to the merits of His well-beloved Son: that we must take nothing to ourselves but *shame and confusion*, nor flatter ourselves with the hopes of being acceptable to God without faith and repentance, and the imitation of all the virtues of our Lord and Saviour, as far as is possible for us.

These are some of the principal truths which the Holy Scriptures teach us, and what we could never have discovered without revelation. It helps to reconcile the contradictions we find in our own nature. Man is neither beast nor devil, and far less a god; but he has something in him of all the three; experience shews it in his actions. Things are done by man which look more diabolical than human; and there are things brutal to the last degree; but there are other things (it is a pity they are so few) which look very like divine.

CHAPTER IV.

THE UNHAPPY EFFECTS OF THE FALL CONSIDERED A LITTLE FARTHER.

By the fall of our first parents the divine image is very much disfigured in us, and we are sunk in wickedness and folly. It is necessary to keep our folly in mind, for we are often proud of our being wicked; but the remembrance of our being foolish would help to keep us humble.

We see what men are in the present age. If we look backwards, and believe the report of those who have lived before us, we shall find matters very little better. All histories are full of the corruptions of men, and their

violence against one another; and the sacred history informs us, that when there were but two brothers upon the earth, the one killed the other; and that wickedness, in the course of a few generations, came to that height, that all mankind were destroyed by the flood, except one single family, which was saved in the ark, with so many creatures as Noah was ordered to take into it, to preserve their kinds. Every body talks of the flood of Noah; it were well worth the while to think seriously of that dreadful event, and the cause that brought it about; I mean the abominations of fallen men.

Men still go on in the old way, so deep is the corruption of our nature. "The works of the flesh are manifest," says S. Paul, "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." He adds, "That they who do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." *

Thus the holy apostle hath given us a sad list of our disorders and crimes (the miserable effects of the fall) and he could have named more, if he had thought it needful.

S. John reduceth all the disorders that are in the world, to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." † But the flesh is often used to signify our whole corrupt nature, and the motions of it in general, in opposition to the Spirit of God, or whatever remains of it in us. Flesh is opposed to spirit, as nature is opposed to grace.

These unhappy consequences of the fall, are the evils that have seized upon the soul of man; and sometimes they are called *moral evils*; as other evils that have

* Gal. v. 19, 20, 21

† 1 John ii. 16.

seized both soul and body, are only called *natural evils*, and there is no sin in them.

The natural evils of the soul are darkness and confusion of the understanding and irregular passions of the heart; for passions are not vices unless they are viciously directed. But, at least, our passions and ignorance give us a great deal of trouble; the very defects of our memory are a vexation to us, and create us much labour. By the natural evils of the soul, I understand no more than the defects presently mentioned; nothing is sin but what proceeds from a perverse and deliberate will, commonly called a *bad heart*.

The natural evils of the body are sickness, pain, weariness, and whatever people use to complain of; for they seldom complain of the infirmities of their mind.

Then we have the evil of things without us to think of; the disorders of the air, fire, and water, which make our habitation of earth often very comfortless. Without being at sea, we are frightened in our houses with storms of wind, thunder, and lightning; earthquakes (though seldom felt in this island) are still more dreadful; every thing is in a violent state, and opposite to man as a guilty creature.

The curse of the earth certainly implies more than we imagine; and without some heinous offence, such a punishment would not have been inflicted; for God put man at first into a paradise of delights, and "saw that every thing He had made was very good."

There is a mixture of good still; but the present state is nevertheless a state of trouble and distress for the greatest part; and the sons of Adam are not to expect their paradise here.

CHAPTER V.

VEXATION AND SUFFERING THE LOT OF ALL MEN.

THIS is a plain case, much felt by every body, and often mentioned in holy writ. But we see, and feel, and forget.

"All is vanity and vexation of spirit." This we are told by Solomon, the wisest of men, and the most fortunate as to every thing this world could afford. Let his history be read with attention. He seems to have been raised up by Providence, to show all men that come after him, the emptiness and disquiet of the present world; for who can make so much of it as he did? and yet we see what he says of it.

But men's heads are turned. This world, rotten as it is, deludes us; and almost every body fancies he shall do better than Solomon.

The lowest ranks are still aiming to be higher; still climbing, and dashing themselves to pieces. If some few get into a better fortune than they were born to, what trouble and sorrow have they with it! It would be much wiser (as S. Paul advises,) "to be content with food and raiment." Most servants are easier than their masters. I confess it is not only because men think they would be easier in a higher condition, that they seek to raise themselves; it is their pride also, which makes them climb and thrust forward.

But as suffering is the lot of all men, the highest (generally speaking) suffer most; their station exposes them to envy, their pride grows still more impatient of contradiction, and they have great difficulty in keeping measures with people as proud as themselves. Then, as to the natural evils of sickness and death, the highest

ranks are no less exposed than the lowest : they are rather more, and often destroy themselves by their intemperance.

Temptation, danger, and pain, are everywhere ; men are very much alike by nature : death makes them perfectly equal.

We carry within us the principles or seeds of our vexation and suffering ; outward things could not affect us as they do, if it were not for that inward corruption. How long shall we continue in our dreams ? “ O ye sons of men,” says David, “ how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing ? ” * The things of the world are but lies, and have no reality. We hear of “ the pleasures of sin for a season,” † which Moses wisely despised ; for they are but lies, because of their short continuance, and the sorrows to which they expose us afterwards.

All are born to suffer. It is the present establishment of things, and none can alter it. “ Great travail is created for every man, and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam,—from him that sitteth on a throne of glory, unto him that is humbled in earth and ashes.” ‡ We may be well persuaded that Solomon himself has been sick and weary. His outward splendour was a figure of the glorious state which things shall one day be in ; but as he *was born of a woman*, he must have had trouble in his own person. He is likewise a remarkable instance of the danger of prosperity and pleasure, since notwithstanding all his wisdom, he fell into a stupid idolatry.

* Psalm iv. 2.

† Heb. xi. 25.

‡ Eccles. vi. 1, 3.

CHAPTER VI.

OF DEATH.

ONE grievous effect of the fall was death; for God only threatened it upon man's disobedience. "It is appointed for all men once to die, and after that the judgment." This is a sentence we cannot think of without horror. Nature shrinks at its dissolution. Every creature that hath life, endeavours to preserve it. To say nothing of future apprehensions, nature hath implanted in us a dread of losing our present existence.

But with rational creatures there would be less fear of death, if it were not for the *judgment* that comes after it. Men would fear death, and shun danger, as other living creatures do; but if they thought of what is to follow, they would be in great perplexity; and nothing could support them but the consideration of the goodness of God.

But alas! we think very little about death. We are stupid and drunk with the low pleasures of this world; and when we begin to think of that fatal period, we soon give it over, the prospect is so dark and dismal.

It is not always because we are sorry to part with the joys of life, that the thoughts of death overwhelm us. We find persons whose life may be reckoned a burden to them, and yet they would gladly lengthen it if they could; which is a strong presumption that they have some fear of entering into another state, and undergoing the judgment of God.

If that were not the case, if there were not a secret impression of a future state, simple death could not be so terrible a prospect to a reasonable creature; it would be but like a deep sleep, and a real relief from many

troubles. No more oppression, no more calumny, no more toil, no more pain, no more grief. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." *

But, naturally, some horror must be felt at the thoughts of our leaving the body; for the soul knows not whither it is going; and "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Let us not, however, be so afraid of death, as if we had no hope in God. Our Saviour hath "overcome the sharpness of death, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers;" that is, to all who truly believe His doctrine, and faithfully imitate His example. Belief alone is not sufficient, for "the devils believe and tremble."

Let us think of death, as what it is, to wit, a release from a painful life, and the end of a tedious journey. At the same time, we must look upon it as the punishment of guilt in our first parents, and a just condemnation of our own pride. It is very just that our high heads should be laid low, and that the worms should feed on our bodies, which many of us have treated with so much expense and care.

Let us, on the other hand, think of death, as an entrance into a state of happiness, or into a *house* which our blessed Saviour hath prepared for those that love Him. This prospect would fill us with joy, when we consider, that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

But our composition is very strange! neither the thoughts of heaven nor hell affect us: we live as if we were never to die; the present perishing things only

* Job iii. 17.

touch us; we talk of hopes and fears in the next world, but our affections are only set upon this earth; any little good we do is chiefly "to be seen of men;" and if we abstain from any evil, it is chiefly for fear of their reproach. Yet those very men we are thus afraid of, must die like ourselves; and we see our friends and acquaintance dropping every day; but for all this we never change our conduct; we live as if we were immortal, and our names never to be forgotten!

How would the thoughts of death put a stop to our extravagant and silly pursuits! how would it check our unlawful pleasures, and make us moderate in those that are lawful!

We are but like shadows or apparitions upon this earth, and must soon give place to others, perhaps as vain and foolish as ourselves. Who is it that reflects seriously on these things? "Lord, help us so to live, that we may not be too much afraid to die."

How dreadful will it be at death, to look back upon a life spent in drinking, swearing, lewdness, covetousness, fraud, oppression, or in any of the works of the flesh! not only to think upon the evil we have done, but the good that we have omitted! If some particular persons seem to die without any appearance of remorse or fear, we are not sure but they feel more than they acknowledge, and that they may take pains to conceal what they feel. If there be no remorse at all, it must either be from stupidity, or a hardness of heart, contracted by stifling the repeated checks of conscience. For, generally speaking, conscience does stir; and it is very natural to fear that fatal period, which not only separates us from all that is dear to us in this world, but which is like casting us from a precipice into a gulf without bottom.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOODNESS AND WISDOM OF GOD IN THE PRESENT
ESTABLISHMENT OF THINGS.

MAN'S first state was a state of innocence : the present is a state of guilt. We need not wonder, then, to find many things uneasy to us, since we are criminals (being the posterity of Adam), and sent here for a short time of trial. We are not absolutely condemned, but conditionally ; that is, if we do wickedly, we shall die, and if we do righteously, we shall live. St Paul confirms it : " If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."*

Now, since the heart of man is corrupted by sin, and his understanding so darkened, that his thoughts are set upon the present world ; it is happy for him that he is not now in a paradise, and that this world must disappoint and vex him ; otherwise (as is observed already) he would have been more allured than he is.

The earth was therefore deprived of its primitive fruitfulness and beauty, that man might set his heart less upon it ; his body was made weak, that he might feel the uneasiness of toil ; and his labour must be attended with uncertainty, to lessen his covetousness, and to teach him to depend upon God only for his necessary subsistence.

The earth was fitted to the state of man's frail body, and his body fitted to the disorders of his soul ; all fitted well together. To have put a perverse mischievous soul into a body that could not be wearied, would have

* Rom. vii. 13.

produced terrible effects. The necessities of refreshment and rest give some little peace to mankind. Nor is our weakness a greater restraint upon our mischievousness and tyranny, than upon our debauchery and intemperance.

The wisdom and goodness of God is exceeding remarkable, in mixing and tempering all things so well. Man's violence is restrained by his weakness; his life has been shortened once and again; and it is very probable the earth is less pleasant and fertile since the flood.

But still a thousand delights and beauties remain! *The light is sweet*; the sun is glorious; and the moon and stars have their particular beauties. Then, there are the numberless beauties of the field, the corn, the grass, the trees, flowers, herbs, fountains, rivers, the sea, every thing so agreeable and so useful, that we would almost think ourselves in paradise still.

All our senses, as well as our eyes, are delightfully entertained; the ear with music, and so of all the rest. And how many pleasures are there of the understanding and the heart! It is pleasure to acquire knowledge, and more pleasure to acquire friendship.

But our eyes must soon be closed as to all created objects, and sickness makes us lose the relish of them in the mean time: nothing is durable and fixed. But all this uncertainty is good with respect to a higher end. We are made for a better world, and it is good for us to get warnings that we must leave the present.

Death itself is good, as being a state of rest to those "that die in the Lord;" a state at least (as is generally believed) where temptation is at an end. It is sometimes good with respect to those that survive, for it rids the earth of monsters: but this is the most melancholy consideration of all, that such monsters should be.

Let us think of the goodness and wisdom of God, in ordering the different periods or stages of life. How fit is it that man is born helpless, to create compassion and care ! the distress of the mother raises pity, as well as the condition of the crying infant. How proper is childhood for taming and instructing the fierce and ignorant spirit ! Youth has its discipline too. Riper years have their several crosses laid upon them ; and poor old age is made up of weariness and sorrow, in order to make us leave the world with the better will.

The changes of the seasons are of benefit, and some pleasure. We love variety : and those changes help to make us depend a little more on Providence, and also to keep us in mind that nothing is lasting here : the spring draws on the summer, the summer the harvest, the harvest the winter, and the winter the spring ; and they are necessary, as well as beautiful, in their time.

Nor should we forget the goodness and wisdom of God in appointing work and labour for man since the fall ; it not only restrains him from doing mischief, but refreshes his spirits, when it is not excessive. None are so dull and heavy as those that are idle : we see what difficulty they have to pass the time, and the silly diversions they fall upon to keep up their spirits. The lower ranks of mankind are happy in that point, if they knew it. We may plainly see the hand of God in the contrivance of labour ; for He might easily have made the earth not only produce without any pains or toil, but He might also have made us less subject to other necessities. This body gives much work to feed it, and clothe it, and keep it clean. But His wisdom extends to every thing ; the good of particular persons is provided for, as well as the quiet of society.

But there are yet higher things to consider. Man was made to love God. If there had been more perfeo-

tion in created things, he would have forgot his chief end entirely. Our own imperfections should make us think ourselves less lovely than commonly we do, and consequently beat down our pride: and the imperfections of others seem designed to make us dote less upon them, and to raise our love to the fountain of all beauty and perfection, though we cannot see it. Our friends cannot help us in the greatest distress, but "God is mighty to save." Our friends even make us suffer by their defects, and we make them suffer by ours. Among the best friends there is reserve and closeness, but we may lay ourselves open to God, as hoping that He will help us without *upbraiding us*.

I say, the defects of all created things are of use to make us look up to the all-perfect Creator. Our decaying bodies, which we pamper and adorn, are soon to be the food of worms. But this may make us think of a more durable and finer state in another world. And we should often cast our eye to the great promises in the Scriptures, both that we be not cheated with the empty pleasures here, nor cast down when we think of the numberless pains and sorrows that necessarily fall to our lot.

Infinite goodness draws good out of every thing. Our very passions and follies are sometimes of use to make us somewhat more regular than otherwise we would be; mutual fear makes us careful not to stir up one another's anger, and to prevent bodily harm; and the fear of censure and ill tongues is a considerable defence of our weak virtue. We would more frequently do ill, if we were not afraid that ill would be said of us. I grant this is not true virtue, nor can any thing be acceptable to God when it is only done upon worldly motives, and selfish considerations; however, it is so far good for us not to be wholly abandoned, or without shame; for we may chance to reflect afterwards, and find out the beauty of virtue

and religion, which we could never do in a profligate course of life.

It is indeed very remarkable, that disappointments, trouble, fear, folly, every thing, should produce such happy effects! but it is most worthy of infinite wisdom and goodness, that our own faults should mend us, by making us humble; and that faults and imperfections in general should raise our hearts above this present world.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOD'S GOODNESS TO HIS CREATURES AT ALL TIMES.

ALL creatures feel the divine care and goodness; "He opens His hand, and they are filled with good." * That whole Psalm is extraordinary moving.

Mankind may be said to be God's peculiar care; they are formed "after His image," and His "delights are to be with the children of men." So the Scripture assures us.

In the state of innocence, no pleasure was denied; nothing was forbidden but the fruit of one tree; and "perhaps, before it was forbidden, mankind began to be too aspiring." We are likely to remain in darkness concerning those hidden things, and must stick to the plain history, that "our first parents fell." Their fault was not the less heinous, that they were tempted by the devil, whose arrogance had made him fall before; he said, "he would be like the Most High." † This pride and folly of our enemy is inconceivable; but St. Jude tells us of angels "who kept not their first estate," and their arrogance must have thrust them down. It cannot be otherwise (we may well think) in the nature of things.

* Psalm civ. 28.

† Isaiah xiv. 14.

Certainly man has very little reason to be proud; and yet sometimes he is said to be as proud as Lucifer!

But to humble this pride of man, it pleased God to subject him to all the miseries of body and soul, which we have hitherto mentioned, and can never be enough sensible of. After our Saviour's atonement for us, if we were free of pride and other vices (though pride is the most criminal), our recovery would come of course.

I shall not say there is any man that equals himself with God; but still it is arrogance if he does not give God the glory of any gifts he has received from Him; and it is great folly to think he has received more than he hath, which is very often our case.

But the goodness of God follows us at all times; He gives us good things to enjoy, and mixes bitter things with them, that we may not be intoxicated or drunk with pleasure; and to raise us out of our lethargy He sometimes inflicts the severest chastisements.

God hath moreover given to mankind, at several times, express manifestations of His will, to the end they might mend their lives, and escape His wrath. Thus He warned the old world by Noah, and thus He declared Himself to Abraham against Sodom and Gomorrah, and in like manner to Jonas against Nineveh; with many other instances.

But, which is more remarkable, when the light of nature was almost extinguished, and the most abominable things done by men, God was pleased to give express laws in writing to a whole nation, by whose example the rest of the world might be reformed; especially when they considered how much God had done, and what wonders He had wrought for that people. Let us think of the plagues of Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, the journeying in the wilderness, the *manna*, or food from heaven, the water out of the rock, the

entry into the promised land, and miraculous victories over the inhabitants ; let us consider these things, and particularly the giving of the law with thunder and lightning, and the shaking of the mount, and we shall find the greatest manifestations of the Divine power that we can imagine.

Let us also consider all the chastisements of that people, upon their frequent falling into idolatry and wickedness, their deliverances from their enemies, new crimes, and new slavery, many things foretold by the prophets, and the exact fulfilling of them ; is not all this enough to convince us of the great stupidity and perverseness of human nature, and of God's infinite mercy and long-suffering ?

But nothing comes up to our Saviour's taking our nature upon Him, and doing and suffering for us what He did. He came in the *fulness of time*, the time that was fixed for His coming, and marked by the prophet Daniel.*

The law of Moses was not able to make "the observers of it perfect," † as the apostle tells the Hebrews very plainly. It was good for the purposes that God designed it, and no more was required but the faithful observance of it while it stood. And many pious and wonderful men were found among the Jews, before our Saviour came into the world ; yea, before the law of Moses, holy persons were found, as Abraham, and others descended of him ; and holy men are found even before the flood, for instance Enoch, who walked with God, and Noah himself ; which shews that, in all periods of the world, there have been righteous persons, and consequently accepted of God.

But as wickedness increased, new methods were fallen

* Dan. ix. 24.

† Heb. x. 1.

upon by the wisdom of God, Who gave *precept upon precept*, and *spoke at divers times and in sundry manners*. But the completest instruction of all, was reserved to the blessed Jesus.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME PRECEPTS AND TRUTHS IN THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

OUR Saviour hath taught us truths which we could not have known without His light, and duties which we cannot perform without His assistance; but He has promised His assistance to all who sincerely ask it. The first duty that may occur to us is prayer, on account of our wants and our dangers. The heart may be said to have a way of speaking to God without words, "with groans that cannot be uttered:" but when words are to be used, what can be so fit as those our Saviour Himself condescended to teach? The mind indeed must be in a right disposition, otherwise all words and desires are in vain. "Ye ask, and have not," says the Apostle,* "because ye ask amiss." For which reason I mention the asking sincerely, that is, with a design of pleasing God, as well as for any benefit to ourselves; or rather, we should seek to please God in the first place: this we should have at heart, when we say, "Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done," &c.

That prayer, commonly called the *Lord's Prayer*, ought to be well considered: it shews us our greatness, in having God for our Father; it shews us our wants, when we pray for *our daily bread*; and our dangers, when we pray to be *delivered from evil*; it shews us

* James iv. 3.

the measure of forgiving others, namely, as we would wish to be *forgiven* ourselves; it shews us (if I may speak so) how we ought to enter into the interests of God, when we pray that His *kingdom may come*; and how perfectly our own will ought to be resigned, when we pray that *His will may be done*. I shall leave all the words of that most divine and perfect form of prayer to be considered in their proper order.

If we would give attention, we should see in how small compass our chief duties lie, with many truths of the greatest consequence.

Praise and thanksgiving are also found in that same complete form of prayer, and they are duties we are highly obliged to perform: *Be thankful unto Him, and speak good of His name*. Praise is a cheerful thing; the mind could have no entertainment so pleasant; prayer is a relief to the mind in trouble; praise is a delight to it in prosperity.

Public praise and prayer stir up the mind, and awaken it from its slumber; for we are asleep as to heavenly things, and our thoughts are often wandering in the midst of our devotions; but still public devotions are of great use.

Private praise and prayer may be performed almost without interruption, the lifting up of the heart may be so frequent; and in those private devotions, there is no fear of hypocrisy or ostentation.

Meditation is another kind of private devotion, in which the mind thinks of the power and wisdom of God, or any of His attributes: it considers the works of creation and providence; and as these things cannot be considered without delight, meditation will naturally end in praise and thanksgiving; and when we think on our own folly and corruption, together with the sad state of the earth, our meditation will naturally end in prayer. It

is impossible for those who are taken up with the low pursuits of the world, and who never pray but for form's sake, to comprehend what delight others may have, who pray from another spirit; nor what discoveries it may please God to make unto them.

All the Christian virtues are inseparably linked together; but humility is a principal one, and without it prayer would not be acceptable, nor any thing that we could perform. Humility has been called "the altar on which God would have us offer our sacrifices:" and this justly; for what can the worship of the proud signify, whose end, in all their actions, is their own glory rather than God's?

The good effects of humility, and the bad effects of pride, are both seen in that excellent hymn of the Virgin Mary, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek," &c.

We are taught to pray, that "God's kingdom may come," not only His glorious reign in the next world, which will come in His appointed time, but also that He may reign in the soul during the present life; and this can only be in the soul that is humble; for "God resisteth the proud."

Nor can our prayers be of any use to us, unless we deny ourselves, and follow the example of our blessed Saviour. If we pretend to pray, without abstaining from what our conscience tells us we ought to abstain, we do not "lift up pure hands."

Let us run over in our minds the other duties and truths of Christianity, and this will help to give us a clearer view of that heavenly religion than generally we have.

CHAPTER X.

THE MANNERS OF THE PRESENT CHRISTIANS COMPARED
WITH THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS CHRIST.

THIS comparison is extremely melancholy. We see in the Acts of the Apostles how great marks of love the primitive Christians expressed to one another, and to the whole earth. They lived according to the doctrine of their blessed Master ; and we cannot too often think of that doctrine of universal love, and of all virtues.

Nor should we ever forget our Saviour's example, since example often goes farther than precept. He lived poor, we are eager to be rich : this is enough to shew how His example is followed at present.

But we ought particularly to remember His manner of life before He entered upon His ministry : He lived thirty years in an obscure and poor employment ; He shewed Himself only to the world "to obey the will of Him that sent Him," and to do good to mankind ; He still continued in His poverty, having nowhere to lay His head ; and submitted to the cruelest affronts, and the severest death.

Many Christians at first imitated their great Master ; they did not rush into employments, they were content with food and raiment, and patiently endured hunger and thirst, and the greatest poverty, contempt, imprisonment, scourging, and death itself.

When their numbers increased, they were still more persecuted ; and it is almost incredible what they endured for the name of Christ, under the persecuting Emperors, for the space of three hundred years. Shall I ask, how many would suffer martyrdom in this age ?

Nothing would be more useful than to have our

Saviour's words frequently in our mind, and to put the question to ourselves, How do we observe them? For instance,

Jesus Christ says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Do not we lay up as much as we can, and still covet more? Most of our Saviour's precepts and counsels have a reason joined to them, as that the treasures of the earth are liable to so many accidents, and the heavenly treasures to none. The same observation may be made of other of His blessed instructions.

Jesus Christ says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," Do not we judge and condemn our neighbours, without hearing what they have to say for themselves? Is not the most of our conversation taken up in censuring and blaming, and putting hard constructions upon every body's actions? And as we censure others, so they censure us.

Jesus Christ says, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." And are not our expressions very often full of insolence and contempt? And they would be so more frequently, if we were not afraid of worse treatment from others; for the danger of hell is little minded.

Not only the sermon on the Mount should be considered, but the whole strain of our Saviour's doctrine, with which we may compare our own behaviour.

Jesus Christ bids us "be humble:" Are not we extravagantly proud? He bids us "take the lowest place:" Are we not still aiming at the highest? He bids us "be meek:" Are we not stubborn and passionate? At the same rate, we may go through all our Saviour's instructions, and the instructions of His apostles, and compare them with the practice of the professors of Christianity at this time.

It will perhaps be said, that Christians have been very corrupt at all times. The thing is too true: even in the apostles' days there were corruptions both in doctrine and practice; pride gives rise to contentions and heresies. But after the persecutions ceased, the corruptions grew excessive: when the Church was in riches and splendour, a door was opened to competition and envy; and luxury increased among all ranks.

To preach up poverty, and live in pomp, is very unsuitable. But let the doctrine of Christ be followed, and not the manners of men: and let those who blame others in different stations, consider their consciences, if they would not do the same things, were they in the same circumstances. And let it be considered in general, that the great decay of Christianity is chiefly owing to the neglect of that great duty of self-denial.

CHAPTER XI.

SELF-DENIAL THE FOUNDATION OF MOST OF THE CHRISTIAN DUTIES.

SOMEWHAT hath been said upon this head already. We must deny ourselves, if we would be the disciples of Jesus Christ. This truth cannot be too often repeated.

Faith is indeed supposed to go before all duties. We must have some faith even before we pray; and we must pray that we may get more faith.

We must pray also that we may be assisted in the great work of self-denial. If we continue to indulge ourselves in things wherein we know we ought to deny ourselves, our prayers cannot be heard upon any account; for our conscience gives us the lie.

We must consider with our own conscience, what

things we ought to deny ourselves in ; for no man can lay down rules to his neighbour.

Every body knows he should abstain from gross sins, which is one kind of self-denial ; but there are even some gross sins, which the force of custom makes people forget that they are sins, such as *drunkenness*, which St Paul numbereth among the abominable works of the flesh.

But self-denial, in things that are not so gross, is almost quite forgot. It is self-denial to restrain a passionate word ; but very few are at any pains with themselves in that point. The rude ignorant people curse their neighbours to their face, and rail and scold in a shameful manner ; and some who have had better education, fail prodigiously in the government of the tongue.

But it is not angry words only that are to be restrained, but whatever gratifies our own vanity, or our neighbour's, though we are not so ready to err upon this last side: the most of our discourse drives at some respect lost for ourselves ; we seek to shew our skill and our wit in every thing ; sometimes we have a desire to be thought religious, and at other times we are ashamed to own religion ; just as the fancy takes us, or as we think it will raise our character with the present company.

Self-denial would suppress all these foolish and wicked motions, or at least weaken them : for we must remember, that all sins come from the heart, or lie in the will ; our members only execute our vile purposes ; the hand that kills is not to blame, for the same hand may give alms ; as the same tongue that *curse*s may *ble*ss.

If we could get the length of self-denial, the most of *our* work would be done, and God would do the rest ; something we must do ; our conscience tells us so ; "but it is God Who worketh in us both to will and to do."

The sun shines first, but we must open our eyes to see the light ; we must own that the very power of opening our eyes is from God ; but we dare not say that He refuses us this power.

We must resign ourselves, or give up our will and all we have to God ; and if we do this heartily, we shall soon be led to all the acts of self-denial that are fit for us.

We must acknowledge, to the honour of religion, that self-denial is only required upon our own account. God, Who hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, hath none in any affliction or uneasiness. To deny ourselves, is but to deny our corrupt nature in its perverse appetites and imaginations. It is true, we must deny it even in its allowable desires, when the indulging them would interfere with our perfection.

We are in a fallen corrupted state. It is now necessary for us to deny our own wills, to stifle our irregular passions and appetites, as far as we are able. We must subdue our vanity and our excessive desire of esteem.

We are surrounded with temptations of all kinds ; we must therefore keep a continual watch over our actions, our words, and our very thoughts. All this is self-denial ; for we are forward and prone to all evil and folly : we can hardly be in a place where drink is going, without being drunk ; we can hardly open our mouth to speak, without speaking unfavourably of our neighbours, or too favourably of ourselves ; if not sounding our own praises directly, at least falling upon contrivances to make others praise us.

It were endless to mention all our defects ; and consequently all the acts of self-denial which we should practise upon every occasion. We must examine ourselves, and see what vices we are most inclined to, or

"the weights which so easily beset us," as the apostle says, and pray to God that He may remove them.

There is one thing always to be kept in mind, that if we do not deny ourselves, by checking the first motions of vice, they grow too strong for us to resist, and one vicious act makes way for another, till at last there is a settled habit, and we are tied and bound with chains of our own making. Let us consider this carefully, from the melancholy instances we may have felt in ourselves, and heard of in others.

Here somewhat ought to be said concerning the cross, as being the particular badge of Christianity. Our Saviour bids us "take up our cross;" for it is laid upon all men, and the taking it up implieth a cheerful submission to it.

The cross must be bitter to us, or it would be no cross; and God, Who knoweth best what is necessary for our cure, layeth such crosses upon us as His divine wisdom sees fit for that purpose. There are crosses to bear every hour of the day: whatever contradicts our humour is a cross, whether the contradiction is reasonable or not. Different tempers must cross and mortify one another, which doth good on both sides; even well intentioned people may crucify one another, through their remains of imperfection: and their reflecting afterwards upon their error is a new cross to themselves.

Bodily pain, and loss of goods and reputation, are crosses that God lays upon us. Persons advanced in the spiritual life, speak of crosses laid on more immediately by His divine hand, which are still harder to bear, as tending to a more inward purification.

CHAPTER XII.

OF EQUITY AND COMPASSION.

THE great duty of self-denial, mentioned in the former chapter, would make other duties follow of course, if it were faithfully practised. If the ill humours were out of the body, health would be restored immediately.

Man was made upright, and some sense of equity still remains in him, as also some compassion and tenderness for others.

Equity, or justice, in the highest signification, implies all the duties we owe, even those we owe to God. It is just that we should praise and love Him, because He is infinitely lovely and praise-worthy. But we shall first consider justice only as it relates to men.

Our blessed Saviour gives us the measure or standard of justice or equity ; "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." He adds, "For this is the law and the Prophets." It is all that is required in the law and the prophets with regard to our neighbour. The love of God is indeed the "fulfilling of the law;" but if "we do not love our neighbour whom we have seen, we cannot love God Whom we have not seen." So the apostle tells us. And it is remarkable, that the words of the Scripture have a plainness and force in them, which men very often obscure and weaken by their explications.

The happy effects of justice may be imagined by considering the unhappy effects of injustice. The earth is covered with war and bloodshed ; groans and tears are the effects of injustice even in private persons.

Justice implies compassion. We are naturally dear to ourselves. If we were just, our neighbours would be dear to us in like manner.

It is but a poor kind of justice that only abstains from doing injury. We ought to support and relieve others as we see them in difficulties, since we would wish to be supported and relieved ourselves; and it would not deserve the name of compassion, to pass by a person in distress (though we might feel some pity for him), if we give him no manner of assistance. The *tender-hearted Samaritan* is a noble character.

Hard-heartedness will soon turn into oppression, and oppression into cruelty. How many little oppressions are people guilty of, which are very grievous to the sufferers! A bitter word, a contemptuous look, with many other instances of ill humour, and saucy behaviour; such things happen among equals.

But how many instances of severity in the higher ranks against the lower! The rich oppress the poor. I do not mean those who have not the necessaries of life, but those who are some degrees poorer than themselves. What vexatious lawsuits! what impositions and fines! landlords oppress the farmers, and the farmers oppress any that depend upon them.

Nor are the lowest ranks to be vindicated; for they are troublesome very often. Servants are stubborn and unfaithful, and sometimes as saucy as their masters.

Oppression is too often found among the nearest relations, "husbands bitter against their wives," &c. I confess all these cannot be called oppressions; they are very severe, and discover the want of a tender heart.

It can never be enough considered how Christianity is so eminent for that blessed virtue of compassion, I ought to have called it *brotherly love*, even love to mankind. Christianity requires us to love our enemies. Alas! how far are we from that practice!

To return to justice, equity, righteousness, integrity, which are all words for the same thing. The face of the world would be soon altered if righteousness took

place. But this happy change we are hardly to expect here. Let us, however, do the best we can for our own part, and "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."*

St Paul tells us, after our Saviour, that "all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."† And after he had mentioned the works of the flesh in the same chapter, he says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."

CHAPTER XIII.

OF CHARITY.

THIS divine virtue often passeth only for *giving of alms*, or any good that is done to men; but what St Paul understands chiefly by it, is the love of God. The word *charity* signifies *love*; and this divine virtue is the chief and mother of all virtues; it implies the purest adoration of the Supreme Being, and the fullest surrender of all the powers of our soul: in short, it may be called a principle regulating all our actions and motions. To be convinced of the apostle's meaning, we need but look at the description and the marks he gives of it to the Corinthians. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."‡ The love

* 2 Pet. iii. 13.

† Gal. v. 14.

‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

of our neighbour is certainly included in the apostle's description ; for "charity is kind."

Let the whole chapter be read. The apostle proceeds to give the marks of charity, which cannot agree so well to any thing as to the love of God, though there are things in the description of it that agree likewise to the love of our neighbour : but charity is "that which is perfect." And the apostle concludes, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three ; but the greatest of these is charity."

Reason itself may teach us that the love of God is the greatest of all duties, and that they must all be comprehended in it. In our imperfect love of any person, we do all we can to please and shew our esteem, and are ready to obey all the commands, and to do the will of the beloved person. How much more reasonable is it to do the will of our blessed Maker, and "to love Him with our whole heart, strength and mind !" He is the fountain of all goodness and beauty : we would love Him for His own excellencies, if our hearts were in good order ; and all we can do in the mean time is to give up our hearts wholly to Him, that He may cleanse and purify them, and enlighten our minds, that we may see His divine perfections in the true light.

We must pray for the assistance and grace of God, that we may be enabled to do what we cannot do by nature, or of ourselves. We must pray, that He would root out every thing in us that hinders us from loving Him with all the powers and faculties of our soul.

We have no notion of the deep corruption that hinders us from loving God : "We cannot serve two masters ;" we love the world, and the things in it, and these chiefly for the love we bear to ourselves : so that it is this hateful *self-love*, or selfishness, that makes us forget God, and care for nothing but what pleases us for the

present time, or serves our present interest, or rather our humour; for our friends become our enemies, how soon they cross our inclinations, even though they do it for our good.

Thus are we blinded by *self-love*, which is the idol we set up in the place of God. The heathens, who worship stocks and stones ignorantly, are not so much to blame, as we who worship ourselves, and would have every body fall down before us.

But it is only the power of God that can break this idol to pieces. It is not in our power to free ourselves of our arrogance and folly. Any good thing we do is ready to make us value ourselves upon it, and so we grow more proud. If we do not *give alms* with a design *that we may be seen of men*, at least the reflection is apt to come in our heads, that men will praise us, and we have often too much complacency in that reflection.

But often we perform our poor works with an express intention that men may praise us; and we endeavour to come off as cheap as we can: Going to church is but a small matter; and we can meet with an acquaintance at the same time, or shew our best clothes; and this we would have pass for devotion.

I am far from disparaging any religious observance; we have need of many things to stir up our dull minds: but I wish people would examine themselves upon the motives of their actions, and see whether they are done for God's glory or their own.

What are we, that we should rob God of His glory? *Dust and ashes* and sin. We may see the reasonableness of self-denial, though our Saviour had not recommended it: it is just with respect to God, and necessary upon our own account; for we must ascend to the love of God by those steps of prayer, self-denial, and all the other duties of religion.

I must say again, that common reason is enough to shew us, that God's glory ought to be the aim of all our actions; and that we ought to love Him above all things, since He is the most perfect of all beings, and the Author of all that is good; and that our heart must love something, and is only happy in loving what can satisfy it, which created things can never do. All this I say, reason may teach us imperfectly, but it is only the divine light that can teach us perfectly, and only the divine power that can draw us out of our *corruption* and *selfishness*, which are but two words for the same thing.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF TRUE CONVERSION.

MEN are very ready to fall into dangerous mistakes concerning this point, not considering that conversion is the turning from the love of pleasure to the love of God, from the flesh to the spirit, from unrighteousness to righteousness, or from any state which makes us disagreeable to God, to the contrary, which makes us acceptable to Him.

It is indeed a comfort to think we are in such a Church, or society, where we can have the best helps to religion, and where the doctrine of Jesus Christ is taught in the greatest purity. But this is not all; we must consider seriously what the Gospel requires of us; we must "strive to enter in at the strait gate," and to walk as our Redeemer hath directed us, and walked before us.

We flatter ourselves, if we think to be saved without following our Saviour's example. He says Himself,

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." * Let us put our conversion and our reformation to that touchstone. Let us examine our consciences, and see how our behaviour agrees with that of our blessed Master.

What can possess us to think we are *reformed* and *converted*, when we are still living in wickedness? God is too good to impose upon us; it were blasphemy to think it; if the devil deceiveth us, it seems we are willing to be deceived; and so upon the matter we deceive ourselves. The devil may tempt us, but he cannot force our will; nor can he so delude our understanding, as to make us take vice for virtue. God hath not given our adversary such absolute power over any of our faculties.

But we are at no pains to resist the devil, nor our own corrupt inclinations; and our pride makes us throw the blame of our misdeeds anywhere but upon ourselves: we blame the devil when we should not; yea, we are so void of shame and piety, as sometimes to blame the merciful and just God.

Let us not deceive ourselves, by thinking we are converted, when we are not. To be converted, we must "be renewed in the spirit of our mind," † as the apostle tells us. The going from one party to another, is no more *conversion* nor *reformation*, than the going from one town to another.

Conversion is the drawing near to God with the heart. He complained of the Jews, that "they drew near to Him with their mouth, and honoured Him with their lips, when their heart was far from Him." ‡ See also the first chapter of that prophet, wherein their

* Matth, xviii. 3.

† Eph. iv. 23.

‡ Isaiah xxix. 13.

sacrifices are called *vain oblations*, and all their outward observances are despised, though they were of God's express appointment, and not of man's : but the heart having no share in those things, they became an *abomination*.

What delusion is it to call ourselves the *elect*, the *godly*, the *reformed*, the *regenerate*, the *true Church*, or any title that men take to themselves, without having the spirit of Jesus Christ ? It is uneasy to mention such plain truths, and sometimes they are very unwelcome ; but the delusion is excessive. If, on the other hand, people assume such titles, only to get dominion over others, no words can express such impudence and profanation.

True conversion (I must say it once more) is from the *natural* man to the *spiritual*, from the life of Adam to the life of Christ, from the love of ourselves to the love of God, from sin to righteousness ; in a word, from such states as the Scripture condemneth, to such states as it approveth : for as it cannot be said, that a diseased body recovers health only by changing its clothes, so neither is the health of the soul restored by the mere change of forms and professions.

I beg leave to make a distinction betwixt true conversion and perfect conversion. Perfect conversion is that state wherein "we live no more," (as St Paul expresseth it), "but Christ liveth in us : " and we cannot conceive what we must undergo before we arrive at this blessed state.

True conversion may be said to happen, when our hearts are touched with a sincere desire of forsaking our own will, in order to do the will of our heavenly Father. This may be called real, or true conversion ; for the bare change from one outward form to another, is but a false or sham conversion.

But true conversion may be attended with many imperfections. A man may have a right view of the end of his journey, or the place where he should arrive at, as also of the place from whence he should depart ; he may have a hearty desire to leave the one, and to reach the other :

I say, we may begin our journey from this world to the heavenly Jerusalem, with a very sincere intention ; but then we may be very often entangled with the things of this miserable world, the vain, fruitless desire of pleasing men, and the silly fear of what they may say. We may be likewise hindered by our own violent passions, which may stop our journey like storms of wind or rain. We may be beat down to the ground, and plunged in the mire of vices ; but as we fall, so we may get up again, and go on our journey the best we can ; for we are never to despair of the help of God.

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE RIGHT USE OF TIME.

WE are here but a few days, till we must appear before the judgment seat of God, to give a strict account of all we have done in the body. Of this short time we cannot call a moment our own : we may die with the very word in our mouth. How great need, therefore, have we to employ our short and uncertain time to good purpose ! It is a kind of stock put in our hands to purchase eternal happiness ; and if we squander it away, we lose that happiness, and fall into unspeakable misery.

Sleep and other necessities of our frail bodies, must take away a great part of our time from us : but for this

we are not accountable, if we do not waste too much of it in relieving those necessities, or rather indulging our pleasures.

We must also labour in our several employments, by which much time is cut off from the service of God; but it cannot be called lost time, since work and labour is of His appointment. And what a happiness this is for mankind, every body knows: they who have little to do, are often more unhappy than those who gain their living by the sweat of their brow.

As it is idleness that makes people fall upon foolish amusements and diversions, to pass away the time which hangs so heavy upon their hands, it were very reasonable for them to think how they might pass it better; since, if they ever reflect, especially on a dying bed, it will be very grievous to them, that they have spent their precious time so foolishly and unworthily. How will it torture them to look back upon their gaming and drinking, their obscene discourse, their common way of censuring their neighbours,—in a word, all their trifling and sinful practices!

I shall not condemn every thing that is called diversion. A game at cards is better than drinking, or speaking ill without drinking. A man's own conscience and good advice must direct him for the best, or the least evil, in such cases; for it is to be acknowledged, that both body and mind have need of some relaxation.

The great body of mankind must work hard for their bread; it were good if they could mix some good thoughts with their labour; which they might do if they were wise, and it would very much sweeten their toil. They might meditate in the field upon God's goodness; pious reflections might rise when they plough and sow; and in their houses they might have many occasions of lifting up their hearts to God in short prayers and

praises, without any body's knowing what passed in their minds.

Such secret devotions, or whatever they may be called, might be performed by all ranks : but they must pass very unobservedly, otherwise pride might mingle with them, and the company would look upon it as dreaming, or perhaps madness.

But we are not only to endeavour to spend our time well for our own improvement in devotion ; we must likewise endeavour to spend it for our neighbour's good ; and so we must seek all occasions of relieving the poor and distressed, that properly fall to our share, for prudence must still go along ; at least we must omit no occasion that offereth to us of doing good any manner of way, either by money, or any other assistance.

We must neither forget our neighbours nor ourselves. We must not turn "keepers of others' vineyards, and neglect our own." The constant intention of pleasing God would lead us right in every thing.

That happy intention is the *walking before God*. If we consider ourselves as still in His presence (which undoubtedly we are), we shall employ our whole time in doing what we ought ; though still we must look upon ourselves as unprofitable servants.

One very happy way of passing time is in good conversation ; nor can any thing be more agreeable. But here I suppose there is familiarity, else the discourse must only be upon common things : every one is on his guard, and afraid to talk of religion, lest it should be thought *cant* ; which indeed is very much to be shunned.

But when true friends meet together, who have a relish for pious conversation, they may be very useful to one another ; and they ought to lay aside reserve.

Religious assemblies, public and private prayers, good meditations when alone or in company, (for the mind is

still going upon somewhat,) all these things are very good for employing the time.

Reading books of instruction is what every body knows to be useful, and no books so useful as the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN EXHORTATION TO THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

WHAT pity is it that such a present from heaven should be so shamefully neglected ! The Scriptures are the word of God, and the manifestation of His will to the children of men : how carefully ought we to study them, both from our interest and our duty ! What study could be so pleasant, if we had any taste ? The writings of the Old and New Testament excel all other writings, in the plainness and nobleness of the style, beside the greatness of the truths they discover. How important are these truths, on which our happiness or misery depend for ever ! Yet God speaketh, and men will not hear ! “ Fools hate instruction. We love darkness better than light, because our deeds are evil.”

A little was said before concerning the truths which holy writ teacheth us. It shews us what man was once ; what we are now, through the fault of our first parents ; and what we may be through the merits of Jesus Christ, if our own fault is not a hinderance.

The people of Berea are commended in the Acts of the Apostles, for their diligence in searching the Scriptures : and they had only the books of the Old Testament in their hands. Much more ought the Scriptures to be studied now, since the books of the New Testament are added.

Both Testaments may be compared together. Our Saviour's coming into the world, and all His miracles and sufferings, are prophesied in the Old Testament; and He appealeth to it in His arguing with the Jews, some of whom believed in Him, and others rejected Him, because they expected a Deliverer Who should make them great in this world. Temporal greatness is a bewitching thing.

The state of the Jews at this time is melancholy: it was foretold also; and there are many prophecies concerning their conversion. It will still come: "A thousand years in God's sight are but as one day."

The Old Testament contains the history of that remarkable nation. It begins indeed with the history of the world. What strange events! The *creation*, the *fall*, the *flood*, the *Red Sea*, the *law*, the *promised land*; in a word, all the extraordinary affairs of that people, from Abraham to the captivity, and some things which befel them from that time to the birth of our Saviour, including two-and-forty generations, as St Matthew informeth us.

The New Testament contains our Saviour's life, His doctrine and miracles, His sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension; the beginnings of the Christian Church, the labours and miracles of the apostles, their instruction to the faithful in their epistles; and lastly, the revelation of St John; for the true explication of which, men must wait till God's appointed time.

It must be remembered, that in the books of both Testaments there are more meanings than the literal. St Paul, speaking of Abraham's two sons, the one by Sarah, and the other by the bondwoman, addeth, "Which things are an allegory."

Some of those figures are applicable to the next world. which is called the New Jerusalem; others of them are

applicable to the spiritual state of the soul, as outward circumcision is a figure of the circumcision of the heart, the Canaanites, a figure of our unlawful desires and passions, with a thousand things besides, which have a relation to moral actions and the inward life, though the outward literal meaning is never to be laid aside, unless the expressions are only figurative, as when God is said to have hands and feet, anger, derision, &c. Let this be considered, and perhaps it will not be found a bad key for understanding several passages of holy writ, which would be of great use for the true reformation of our lives.

When one considers all the beauties and advantages of these sacred books, the historical part, the religious ordinances (even under the law,) the pure doctrine, the well attested miracles, the fine compositions of poetry, the prophecies, and their accomplishment, and above all, the life and offices of our blessed Redeemer; I say, when one considers all these things, he must be astonished at the impiety of despising and ridiculing what is so divine in itself, and advantageous to mortals!

But such strange spirits there are, though perhaps they are led by a spirit more cunning than their own, whose interest they are carrying on without any express covenant with him.

Whatever may be of that, it is among the higher ranks that such impiety is most heard of. The great body of the people have a respect for the word of God; they have less pride, and sounder judgment than the "scoffers who walk after their own lusts," as the apostle expresseth it.

At the same time, it must be owned that the great body of the people are very ignorant of the design and meaning of the Scriptures in many cases. It is a pity to see how they fall to work with the Bible; they take

it up at random, and sometimes read a passage of the Levitical law with the same grave tone as if it were a part of Christ's sermon on the Mount.

In this point the judgment of the people is not to be made speeches on, but it proceeds much from inadvertency; and since their intention is good, any little endeavours for their better information ought cheerfully to be given, expecting from the Holy Spirit alone the fruit of any endeavours, and true light only from that Spirit both to others and ourselves.

I have often thought it would not be an ill method for those who have Bibles and can write, to make some extracts out of them, concerning the most remarkable vices and virtues. For example, to take Pride, and so collect some texts concerning the danger and abomination of it. Sometimes the same verse will contain both the vice and the virtue opposite to it.*

As to pride. "When pride cometh, then cometh shame." "Pride goeth before destruction." "A man's pride shall bring him low." "Only by pride cometh contention." "Woe to the crown of pride." "A proud heart will I not suffer." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect to the lowly, but the proud He knoweth afar off." "For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." St. Peter hath said immediately before, "Be ye all subject one to another, and clothed with humility."

The like extracts might be made upon other subjects; against lying and deceit, against gluttony and drunkenness, against sloth, against anger, against hypocrisy, against oppression, against evil speaking of all kinds: in short, against every thing that is offensive to religion and good manners.

* There is somewhat of this kind done by Dr Gastrel; but it need not hinder people from making extracts for themselves, provided they can make them with discretion.

And as the Canaanites were driven out of the Holy Land before the children of Israel got possession of it, so vices are rooted out of the soul before the planting of virtues. And the like extracts might be made as to these :

On righteousness, on temperance, on mercifulness, on the fear and love of God ; which last is all in all.

Extracts might also be made concerning the miseries of the present life and the hopes of a better ; on death and judgment ; or any subject which the well-disposed Christian had a mind to consider with a particular attention.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NECESSITY OF DISCRETION, WATCHFULNESS, AND PRAYER.

THE conclusion of a former chapter suggested a reflection, that in practising certain virtues, and shunning certain vices, we run some hazard of falling into extremes : for the common saying is here very true, That virtue lieth in the middle.

There are some vices so absolutely wicked and base, that we cannot keep at too great a distance from them ; such as pride, envy, malice, and many more. There are some virtues so necessary and charming, that we can never have too much of them, such as sincerity, humility, and the like.

There are lesser virtues, such as liberality, that must be practised with discretion, for if a man should give too much to one that happened to ask first, he might put himself out of a capacity of assisting another person of more worth and necessity that might come afterwards.

Indeed, our blessed Saviour bids us in general "Give to him that asketh; and from him that would borrow, not to turn away." His divine wisdom did not see it necessary to make any restrictions, since nature is too ready to seek excuses and dispensations from its duty.

But we are not so ready to err upon the *giving side*; only we are to guard against too much easiness of temper, which would make us a prey to every importunate, or every unjust person.

Discretion must go along with our actions; the prudence of the serpent must be joined with the simplicity of the dove; our Lord Himself recommends it, and often bids us "beware of men."

Nor is it less necessary we should *beware of ourselves*, since we are our own greatest enemies; for which reason, the duty of self-examination is often recommended: but then we must take care not to go to an excess in making too many reflections upon our own conduct; which would make us fall into foolish scruples, and put a stop to all good actions; it might even turn our heads, and make us distrust the mercy of God. I grant the scrupulous state is not so ordinary as carelessness and impiety: but all extremes are to be shunned.

It is certain that vices can never turn virtues; but there are virtues that may turn vices, by pushing them too far. Cheerfulness is a virtue; but when it passes certain bounds, it is folly and insolence.

Diligence is a virtue; but it may turn to hurry, precipitation, and anxiety of mind. Reproof is a virtue; but it may turn to chiding and scolding.

Thus many good things may degenerate: frugality may become sordid; decent living, fantastical. We may be too coarse, or too fine, in our apparel; too nasty, or too nice: in our behaviour, too formal, or too rough.

We must still guard against doing too little or too

much. Solomon speaks of an excess in righteousness itself. We must not expect too much from imperfect creatures; and there are several things which discretion must make us wink at. It is very true, our Saviour bids us "fulfil all righteousness," but moderation, and bearing with one another, is a part of righteousness; so that Solomon seems only to have cautioned against too rigid exactness.

But who is sufficient for these things? We are surrounded with dangers upon all sides: if we escape *rocks*, we are ready to fall into *quicksands*. We have bad example without us; and within we have our own passions and pride, that still aims to be admired in every thing we do or omit.

We must therefore be constantly upon the watch, according to our Saviour's direction; for we are placed *between fire and water*.

We must watch, and use our utmost endeavours in every thing; but at the same time we must remember, with David, that "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Without His assistance and grace, our prudence is but *folly*, and our best actions *sin*.

This shews clearly the necessity of prayer. We can never reflect enough on our passions, our frailty, and our inconstancy: we have the passion and folly of *the day* to struggle with; we are not the same persons in the forenoon and afternoon; we complain of being engaged with madmen, and forget that we are mad ourselves.

How many things have we to pray for! how many things to pray against! The choice ought certainly to be referred to the "Fountain of all wisdom, That knoweth our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking." This some of the wiser Heathens were sensible of.

Somewhat was said on prayer before ; and on the most excellent form appointed by our Saviour. "Thy will be done," is the most perfect of all petitions. I do not say that the heart may not *pour itself out* according as it finds itself moved : but we always pray best when we come disposed to do the will of God in every thing.

Nor do I say, that we must be always on our knees when we pray : the offering up the heart, in whatever posture, is true prayer : and though our attention must frequently be drawn off from God, because of the things we are necessarily employed in ; yet our heart may be in such a fixed and settled state, as that the common actions of life may be said to be done but by accident ; or even any actions, proceeding from such a frame of heart, may be said to be done "to the glory of God," as St Paul expresseth it.

This is the most material service of God ; this is to honour Him perpetually. Our thoughts are ordinarily scattered and distracted with an infinite number of things that we have nothing to do with : such a frame of heart would gather them in, (which is called recollection), and would free us of a world of trouble, created by our wandering imaginations, and our violent passions.

This state may be termed continual prayer ; it doth not hinder proper action, but rather makes it more vigorous, by freeing it from impertinent clogs.

Our pride and fancy allow us no peace nor quiet, and our passions are our executioners ; we are tortured with imaginary affronts and injuries, when none are intended us.

From all which evils a heart resigned to God, and only intent upon pleasing Him, would fully deliver us. His providence would be enough for us ; we should live without anxiety and hurry ; our time would be sufficient for our business, and we should not be a burden upon

ourselves : no more suspicions ; quarrels would cease ; “ Envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness,” would be far removed from us.

Such a frame of heart would make our moments pass in an unspeakable tranquillity ; all impatience, weariness, and disgust, would be cut off ; we should then be in the state of children, but without their folly ; our life would be attended with spiritual comfort, even in the midst of tribulations, and our death would be “ the death of the righteous,”

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE JEWISH RELIGION AND THE CHRISTIAN.

THESE two religions can only be compared together properly, or with fitness, because they only are of divin institution, and outwardly revealed from heaven. The heathen worship was unhappy, as being the inventions of corrupt men, and probably with great mixture from the powers of darkness ; their rites and ceremonies were so stupid, so impure, so cruel.

Mahomet’s revelations were but pretended ; so the Turkish religion is a mass of wild fictions, an absurd mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity. Many parts of the earth are still overrun with gross idolatry of various sorts.

Before the law of Moses, or the Jewish religion, we hear of no outward institutions from God. Sacrifices, indeed, were in use since the beginning of the world, as we see in the instance of Cain and Abel. But during all the time before the flood, and after it, till the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, mankind were left to the

natural dictates of conscience, or what is called *natural religion*, and sometimes *the patriarchal dispensation*.

Before the flood, the Scripture tells us of some few men who lived plain, inoffensive, religious lives, as having God before their eyes in all their actions. It is said particularly of Enoch, that he walked with God, as was observed before. But as mankind multiplied, they became more corrupt, "and the earth was filled with violence," which brought upon them the judgment of the flood.

The righteous Noah (who was saved with his family) continued to give a good example, except once that we hear he was *drunken*. But the earth being again over-spread with disorders and abominations, it pleased God to call Abraham from his country, and to institute circumcision; he worshipped the true God, and his descendants continued in his religion till the law of Moses was given, at which period ended the patriarchal dispensation.

Now, for understanding the difference between the Jewish and Christian religions, together with the value of each, it will be of great use to consider attentively those two great epistles, to the Romans, and the Hebrews. But we must understand beforehand, that the true Jews and the true Christians had but one essential religion, which consisted in the love of God and our neighbour: for as St Paul hath said, "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outwardly in the flesh," &c. This agrees with Moses' words to the Jews, (Deut. x.) "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked," &c. He had said before, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart," &c. Our Saviour confirms the matter, when He said to the doctor of the law that tempted Him, "Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." We see, then, that love is the end of the law, and that Jews and Christians had but one religion.

In the two epistles above mentioned, the law of Moses gets its due, but the Gospel is preferred, both for its greater efficacy, and the higher character of its Law-giver. Jesus Christ is not only exalted above Moses, but above the angels: for when it is said, "He was made a little lower than the angels,"* it is to be understood as He was Man; for He is "Heir of all things, and Maker of the worlds." He says of Himself, "The Father and I are one;" and St John thus begins his gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Of Moses it is said, "He was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for the testimony of those things which were to be spoken after:" but Christ, "as a Son over His own house," &c. He is also called "the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Much more is to be found in the Hebrews, to shew the insufficiency of the Jewish law in comparison of the gospel; were it but this one verse (chap. x.) "For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins."

In the Romans, the law is sufficiently extolled; but many things are set down in that epistle to give the *Christian dispensation* the preference. "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus:"

* Heb. ii. 7.

it is added, "to them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" * to teach us, that the bare profession and form of Christianity are not sufficient to save us, without the life and power of it, but will rather make our punishment the greater.

Indeed St Paul's great design is, to shew the excellency of faith above the works of the law. The Jews prided themselves that the law was committed to their keeping, and that they observed all the parts of it exactly. The apostle undeceives them, and tells them plainly they were rejected, because they confided in their outward observances and privileges, and despised the rest of the world.

We must carefully remember, that the works of the law, seemingly condemned by the apostle, and which God Himself rejected, when they were not done from the spirit of religion, but from vile motives, or superficially at best; (for He says, by the mouth of a prophet, "Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto Me," † &c.); I am bold to say, the works disregarded by St Paul were by no means the good works of humanity and love, for "without works faith is dead;" as, on the other hand, without faith, no works of any kind could avail us. What Jesus Christ said in the case of marriage, is applicable here, "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." ‡

But once more, as to the difference between the law and the gospel, or the Jewish dispensation and the Christian, or the Old Testament and the New, we find, that the former dispensation was founded in fear, and with rigorous observances; whereas the latter was a dispensation of love, and no burdensome ceremonies required. It is true, we must "deny ourselves, and take

* Rom. viii. 1.

† Isa. i. 13.

‡ Matt. xix. 6.

up the cross:" we must "suffer with Christ, if we would reign with Him;" this is properly the doctrine of the New Testament, wherein the corruption of our nature is more clearly discovered than in the Old. We may conclude too from reason, that the cross and sufferings are only laid upon us for our own good, to cleanse us from our impurity, as metals are purified in the fire. The merciful God hath declared, "He hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner,"* nor is any chastisement inflicted, but for leading man back to his duty; which is a reason, not only for resignation and submission, but for thankfulness and love.

It is evident that the Christian law is much more a law of love than the Jewish, both with relation to God and our neighbour. For though the children of Israel were enjoined to love God with their whole heart, yet rewards (temporal rewards) were promised, to stir them up to that great duty; Infinite Goodness thus condescending to deal with His creatures, according to the weakness and grossness of their state; since they cannot easily perceive, that to love God is the highest reward of itself, and the greatest happiness imaginable, or rather a happiness beyond all imagination.

But as the proper character of the Jewish law was fear, temporal punishments were also threatened, which was another argument of the gross state of the people. Solomon indeed hath said, "The fear of Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" but "perfect love," saith St John, "casteth out fear." This is not to be understood of *filial* fear (the reverence of children to parents), which is distinguished from *slavish* fear, and will no doubt keep its place for ever. In short, St Paul calls the law a *state of bondage*, and the gospel a *state of liberty*.

* Ezek. xviii.

With relation to our neighbour, the gospel is likewise much more a law of love than the Jewish; as easily appears from our Saviour's sermon on the *mount*, and the whole strain of the New Testament. It is true, He reproaches the Jews in these words, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition;"* with much more to that purpose; meaning their neglect of the *moral law*, when they punctually observed the *ceremonial part*. But still love was more insisted upon in the *new law*, and the Christians were at first as remarkable for their love to one another, as they are now for their hatred. It was a strange instance of love, when the multitude of them that believed were of "one heart and of one soul: neither said any, that ought of the things he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

As to the difference between the purity of manners required in the *new law* and the *old*, let our Saviour's doctrine be further considered. Our very thoughts are required to *be pure*.

The effects produced by the Christian religion in its beginnings were suitable to the purity of the doctrine: All debauchery was at an end: The Christians were sober and temperate in every thing; they bore with cheerfulness the scorn and contempt of the heathens, who indulged themselves in their excesses, and from contempt proceeded to hatred and cruelty; which the true followers of the *crucified Jesus* endured also with the utmost constancy! Men and women, the young and aged of both sexes, suffered a variety of exquisite torments, rather than offer a little incense to a heathen idol! and they died praying for their persecutors and tormentors!

The rage of the heathens is the less to be wondered

* Matt. xv. 6.

at, because they saw their own condemnation and reproach in the innocent, regular, chaste, humble lives of the Christians. The decay of the heathen ceremonies, the ridiculous and profane (obscene) inventions, all which "brought no small gain" to the priests, as well as pleasure to the observers, must have raised the indignation of all ranks and employments to the height of fury. It is even thought that the devil, whom our Saviour calls *the prince of this world*, governed mankind in an open manner, uttering his delusive false oracles, and making parents kill their children with their own hands, "souls destitute of help." * No wonder therefore if the Christian religion, which opposed all such worthless and abominable practices, was hated and persecuted by those who had an interest in keeping them up. To say no more of the great enemy of mankind, it is too natural for men themselves to oppress and destroy one another, upon the least interfering of their interests, yea, on the bare difference in opinion. It is to be remembered, however, that even in those times of gross ignorance and abomination, there were some men who lived commendably, and were "accepted of God;" as St. Paul testifies, that "the Gentiles, who had not the law," (the written law of Moses), "did by nature the things contained in the law" (the works of justice and affection, and other virtues), and were therefore "a law unto themselves," &c. By which we may judge if we have any right to condemn all the heathens.

It must indeed be owned, the heathen world was in a very bad state (as it still is) without the light of the gospel; but the power of Jesus Christ, Who raised the dead to life, added this great miracle to the rest, in making His doctrine prevail over the greatest powers of the earth

* Wisdom xlii. 6.

and hell, by the unlikeliest means imaginable to human reason. And how low soever Christianity may be at present, as to the practice, and its doctrine ridiculed by many who take its name, yet the same power that established it, will keep it from falling entirely : “For He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet.”—“And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him, That put all things under Him; that God may be all in all.” *

* 1 Cor. xv. 25, 28.

POSTSCRIPT.

As a multitude of books (of greater and smaller sizes) is still appearing on religious subjects, a man can hardly shun giving his approbation to some, and shewing his dislike to others; though it may be supposed the authors on both sides have lost a great part of their intention, whether of doing good or evil. If any shall say, May not a man keep his approbation or dislike to himself? there is no doubt he may, and very often he ought; but the question is, If he ought always? All the answer I can give is, that in a country where the permission of the superiors is not required, a man must judge for himself the best way he can, having the good of society always in view, at least that it suffer no harm from his meddling.

But as the few sheets (written several years ago) have very little I can call mine in them, so the following scraps shall have still less; that is, the very words, or words of the same meaning, shall be taken out of some books, pretty well known, and unexceptionable; and from others equally unexceptionable, though less known. It seems all one, whether the authors are of the Churches of Rome or England, of Luther's setting up, or Calvin's, nay, suppose them to be Jews, Turks, or Heathens; truth being always truth, and Jesus Christ "the true light, Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." I shall therefore have nothing further to do, but to tack some truths together, which naturally belong to one subject, keeping always in view the first design, of being intelligible to the meanest reader, the meanest as to the world, but whose sincerity and attention may entitle him to the highest privileges.

THE SCRIPTURES.

THESE sacred writings are allowed by all parties of Christians to be of divine authority, and consequently the rule or standard of faith and manners. When they are obscure, we must be content to find our curiosity put to a stand, and our pride mortified. Our duty is still plain; the love of God and our neighbour admits of no gloss nor restriction.

The Church of Rome receives some books as *canonical*, or approved scripture, which Protestant Churches reject, the authors being mostly unknown, and therefore called *apocryphal*, as well as reputed inferior in the point of authority, and even in sublimity. The Church of England, however, appoints them to be read "for example of life, and instruction of manners." *

The Scripture teaches the true and spiritual worship of God, as Jesus Christ said to the woman of Samaria (John iv.) "God is a Spirit," &c. Those sacred writings have a surprising force in them: and herein lies the admirable difference betwixt them and the works of men; the Scripture, under plain and common expressions, contains a strength and meaning wholly divine; whereas men generally fatigue themselves to find strong and elegant terms for expressing very weak things. O that people knew the benefit of reading the Holy Scriptures! It is surprising that any person should be hindered from making it his constant study, especially the New Testament! Should children be hindered from reading their father's will? Everybody, on the contrary, should be taught to read it with the greatest

* Book of Common Prayer, sixth Article of Religion.

attention, respect, and love.—This paragraph is from a Roman Catholic.

There was no written instruction during many ages after Adam was created; and even after his fall, the divine law (written in the heart) was sufficient for the faithful and sincere. This is called the *patriarchal dispensation*. But wickedness prevailed in the earth to such a height, that all the inhabitants (save eight persons) were swept away by the flood. We then hear of precepts given to the sons of Noah; but of nothing written, till the law of Moses, and that only to one nation; so the wisdom of God, the Father of mankind, thought fit; for “God is no respecter of persons.” Prophets were sent to the Jews at different times, to reclaim them from idolatry, and all their vices, as well as to foretell the coming of the Messiah. The writings of the Old Testament are of various kinds, and not to be paralleled, in sublimity and instruction, but by those of the New. This is the *dispensation of the Gospel*, to which nothing is to be added; our Saviour, by His doctrine and example, having finished all that was necessary to be made known to mankind.

The apostles wrote epistles to the Christian converts, to confirm them in their faith, and to remove their mistakes, particularly concerning the Jewish law, which some Christians thought was still in force, with other errors in point of worship; not omitting to recommend the duties of social life, as between husbands and wives, parents and children, &c. With respect to the spiritual life, they had our Saviour’s life for a foundation, which makes them insist so much upon being “united with God, transformed into His image, loving Him with the whole heart;” which is the great duty and happiness of men and angels. They insisted on the necessity of *self-denial*, a doctrine not current among

the Jews, and less known to the heathens, who had never heard of the fall. The Scripture, in fine, has discovered many truths concerning the dignity and corruption of man, and the incomprehensible nature of the ever-blessed God.

THE PRESENT STATE OF NATURE.

THIS is too large a subject to be attempted in few words ; yet there is the less occasion for many, or rather there would be occasion for none, if the Scriptures were well considered : they inform us of the state of the earth before the fall, when there was no toil, no sorrow, nor disorder in man, either as to body or soul.

Ever since the fall, man is much in the same state (the shortening of life after the flood is far from being a loss), born with the same appetites and passions, which he constantly studies to gratify, and by that means is said to "live to himself." Pride, covetousness, and sensuality, prevail much in the human composition, and man is oppressed by one or other of these task-masters by turns : then his imagination representing things to him in a false light, and giving him foolish notions of pleasure, interest, and glory, this makes his condition yet more restless and unhappy. We need not go far to find out the cause of wars, which make the earth desolate, even those parts of it inhabited by the professors of Christianity. St James, who puts the question, "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" makes answer himself, by another question, "Come they not hence, even of your lusts?" Lust is another word both for desire and pleasure ; so covetousness is called by St John, *the lust of the eyes*. We blame kings and princes for making Europe a field of

blood: and no doubt they have the same passions and follies in common with the rest of mortals; but allowances ought to be made them, on account of their elevated stations, which naturally tend to make them giddy; to say nothing of their education, which is often very poor: and then we ought to consider them as besieged by those who commonly have nothing in view but their own ends, in the advices they give their superiors in power and pageantry.

But we ought not to pore upon the disorders of persons in higher ranks, whether in the Church or state. The great body of the people must pay taxes, and groan, without asking questions. Nor should the disorders of private life engage too much attention: it is but a melancholy business, and apt to lead us into a forgetfulness of our own personal disorders and vices, our self-conceit, and blindness of mind. Humility is enjoined to the meanest as well as to the greatest; and there is sometimes as much pride under coarse clothes as in robes of state. We ought to look at home. The consequence of pride is to alienate men from one another, and from the spirit of religion; as humility promotes mutual love, and is the surest mark of true piety.

Human nature is not yet so corrupted, as to be without all sense of moral duties, and even some impression of those we owe our Maker: but this impression, or whatever it be called, is very faint and imperfect; and we are ready to satisfy ourselves with a chimerical religion, and with false hopes in the merits and redemption of Christ, when we have little or no desire of being renewed according to His Spirit. This is deceiving ourselves in the most deplorable manner. God is not mocked. Men even see through our disguises.

True humility, which has a loveliness in it to a well-disposed mind, does not consist in humble expressions

(which are very proper in the public prayers), but in a deep sense of our unworthiness in the sight of God, and in doing nothing to get praise from men. One great point of humility, is to yield our own will to that of others, when justice and good order suffer nothing by such condescension.

CONSCIENCE.

CONSCIENCE is a proof both of man's dignity and misery : it is the accuser, witness, and judge ; and unless true repentance take place, it is " the worm that dieth not." Figures are often the shortest way of conveying instruction : our Saviour made frequent use of them.

The works of God which we see with our bodily eyes, might make us conclude that He is infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness : and we might conclude farther, that all praise and love belong to Him of right. Thus far we might reflect with a certain joy ; and nothing but our stupidity deprives us of it.

But, on the other hand, when conscience is awakened, and we get a sight of our faults, and discover but a little of our misery and corruption, we are scarce able to stand it ; and the merciful God seems to be upon the management with us, and to spare us, by discovering no more of our own nature, or of His, than we can bear and make a good use of.

REPENTANCE.

AN awakened conscience must naturally produce sorrow and remorse, which are other words for repentance ; but properly it signifies a *change of mind*, and

a purpose of leading a new life. Fear and self-interest often stir first, and may go a good length in conversion; but a sense of justice, leading to the love of God, Who is love, would go much farther, and prove a greater security for all duties. Preachers may think of it in their preaching and catechising, instead of insisting always upon terror.

True repentance and conversion are much the same; or the one may be considered as the beginning of the other; and conviction must go before both. Men must fly like criminals to Jesus Christ, Who only waits for their repentance and humility to receive them into mercy.

When pride is removed, were it but for an hour, the soul is not only humble before God, but free from all haughtiness towards men, whom it loves as its brethren, and the images of God. When pride returns, the soul relapses into a state of anger, confusion, folly, and impiety. Repentance vanishes, till some new touch or stroke from the wise and merciful hand of Providence awaken the soul again out of its lethargy.—What passes after death, we know not; but wisdom, abstracting from duty, leaves as little to that uncertainty as possible.

THINGS TO BE AVOIDED. WHAT TO BE KEPT IN VIEW.

HERE again the list must be imperfect, the number of things which are not counted *sinful*, being so very great. But then as they proceed from a corrupt principle, they are really sins themselves; for example, disputes about religion, or any subject a man enters upon to shew his skill and superiority, which commonly ends in putting both parties into a heat. Pride finds its account in such skirmishes.

On the other hand, there may be no less pride in an obstinate silence, when it comes from contempt, or the fear of discovering our own ignorance. Christian simplicity, and a modest opinion of ourselves, would direct us how to behave in company and conversation. To shun bad company, is a common and a sure rule.

Melancholy is much to be avoided; for it may land in a distrust of the goodness of God, and be very troublesome to those we live with, even so far as to create a bitterness against them. The sour temper often turns to wrath, and is quite opposite to that state of joy recommended in holy writ: "God reigneth, let the earth be glad,"—"Rejoice in the Lord always," &c.

It is true we are in a fallen state, and "the creation groaneth." But we are to call to our relief the promises of a happier world, "A new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." And though every thing we hunt after in this life may be said to have delusion stamped upon it, yet there are things which may be called real satisfactions whilst they last. The pleasures of the lowest senses have a reality in them, and the pleasures of friendship are much superior. Persons, again, who have felt the pleasures of religion, do assure us they infinitely surpass all that can be conceived.

But the great number of things to be avoided, either as directly sinful, or leading to sin, may be judged of by looking at some of the instructions of the apostles, here and there; as in these words of St Peter, "Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."* And in St Paul's words to the

* Pet. ii. 1, 2.

Ephesians, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." * See also the next chapter, towards the beginning. Here are but a few passages; many more will be found in the Old and New Testament, to teach us both what to shun, and what we ought to follow. Those who neglect to "search the Scriptures," will find their error when it may be too late to retrieve it.

Our business in this life is, to do as sick people, who put themselves into the hands of a skilful physician, who will infallibly cure them, if they follow his directions, and take the medicines he prescribes. Abstinence from worldly pleasures and fleshly lusts is necessary in our distempered condition. Our Saviour has no need of our *self-denial*; He only enjoins the renouncing the things of this world (rotten at best), that they may not foster our diseases, and deprive us of the heavenly joys He has prepared for us. We are poisoned with self-love, and blind as to our true happiness, which He has put us in the way of obtaining, and given us His blessed example in order to it.

Afflictions are sent us purely for our own good, like sovereign remedies; and supposing them ever so terrible, they are soon at an end. Let us consider what St Paul says of the matter: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." † He adds, as a necessary qualification, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

These eternal things are the object of faith, which in

* Eph. iv. 31.

† 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

another epistle is called "the evidence of things not seen." * It implies also trust in God ("O ye of little faith!"), submission to His divine will in all things, and a constant dependence upon it. *Faith*, in all its acceptations, "is the gift of God;" and "saving faith" is that only "which worketh by love." †

ATTENTION TO THE VOICE OF GOD,

"God is a Spirit;" therefore to imagine He has a voice like man, were an absurdity. Many things are expressed in Scripture by signs accommodated to our weakness and imperfection. This every body knows and admits. Thunder is called the *voice of God*.

Sometimes, indeed, the Scripture makes mention of voices and words spoken to holy men and prophets; but this is supposed to be done by the ministry of angels; and such extraordinary communications are not to be desired; for it might proceed from a desire of being distinguished or exalted above the rest of mankind; and the reward of such pride might justly be delusion.

The voice of God is addressed to the soul of every person, (what higher privilege can be imagined?), and nothing but want of attention hinders it from being heard and obeyed.

Sinners are required in Scripture, "to return to their heart;" to "enter into themselves," and the like; which is the same with hearkening to the conscience. And hence it is that we find such mention of *the inner man*, *the inward parts*, *the hidden man of the heart*,—*the inward man*;—all which are but different expressions

* Heb. xi. 1.

† Gal. v. 6.

of the same thing, called by spiritual authors the *interior*, and sometimes *the centre of the soul*.*

As to our want of attention, it comes from numberless sources: the pursuit of riches, pleasure, bare diversion or amusement, to say nothing of fame or glory, all these are great hinderances to attention. It is true, the great body of the people have fewer things to hunt after than those in higher stations; but every class of mortals, or rather every individual person, hath his pursuits and distractions, by which the mind is drawn off from the consideration of its duty and eternal happiness. The poorest have their projects and their diversions, and are as much given to shew and luxury (generally speaking) as they can afford.

It may be said, the number of distractions that hinder our attention, is next to infinite. How many cares! how many passions! how many whims! and how many wild imaginations, which may be looked upon as a particular distemper, and to which those who are idle are the most liable! Some imaginations are ridiculous to the last degree, others are horrid. Honest labour, what a happiness it is! A wandering imagination is often a heavy cross.

Involuntary imaginations are not indeed criminal; they come into the head like the dreams of the night; and it is not in the power of reason to thrust them out, or they return very soon to the attack. The criminal imaginations are such as rise from the corrupt inclinations, and may be said to have their root in the heart; they spring from the desire of sensual pleasure, or riches, or command, or praise; and by fostering these our desires (especially that of praise and esteem), we take

* This term is understood of the innermost part, or what is properly *divine* in man, and to which the eternal Spirit alone has access.

fancies of our own worth and excellency, and imagine we are admired when we are laughed at.

What shall deliver us from this state of folly, and slavery, and sin? Nothing but the sovereign power of God. It is true, we have the power of *asking*, and it is promised we shall *obtain*; but it is with the condition that we do not ask *amiss*.

To prayer we are to join watchfulness, which is the same with attention. We hear also of *recollection*, which signifies the *gathering in* the scattered affections of the heart, as well as our wandering imaginations, that our love may be fixed upon the only object worthy thereof. If the heart were in good order, the head would grow wiser of course. Involuntary imaginations might contribute to humble our vanity.

One great error, which argues the bad state of our mind, and our folly, is our being in such a dread of censure; so that we may rather be said to give attention to the voice of men than to the voice of God! That this infirmity has its root in our pride is very plain.

But recollection being a thing so little understood by the generality of people, it may not be unnecessary to add a few lines more about it. Recollection, then, is that disposition we must be in for hearkening to God. He speaks to the heart, by giving it good inclinations or motions. He speaks to the understanding by making discoveries of His divine nature, and the nature of man. Common reason may be called *the voice of God*. The beautiful order and productions of the creation strike us; and what we see and feel of the imperfect state of things, is a sort of speaking too, and designed to wean our hearts from earthly satisfactions. Great attention is necessary, that when we find our affections out of order, (which we may find in the beginning, when they are not too strong), we may strive to turn them away, and apply them to lawful

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objects. Reason would be of service to shew the emptiness and trouble of all worldly pursuits, which would be well supported by experience. But chiefly if the love of God were kindled in the heart, it would consume all impurity, and put an end to all disorder.

If, after all the care we can take, and all the attention we can give, we find ourselves still haunted and persecuted by the involuntary imaginations already mentioned, the advice given by persons of experience in the spiritual life is, to condemn those impertinent intruders, like the buzzing of flies, and not to be discouraged by them, since nothing involuntary is sinful. No doubt we ought to abridge our diversions, and even our business, as much as possible, that so our heads may not be filled with the things we have been employed about, or new images raised by some connection with them, or (which is often the case) without any connection.

But that recollection is no less the business of the heart than of the head, (or rather that it chiefly belongs to the heart), is evident from these words of Solomon, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." And by keeping the heart is not only meant being on our guard against our desires and appetites, but likewise against personal aversions, which would prevent all transports of anger, nay, the least approach of ill-humour.

To do all our actions as in the presence of God, (from Whom nothing is hid), and with the design of pleasing Him, (which justice requires), is the best state the heart can be in; it is called *the presence of God*, as well as *recollection*, the mind being *habitually* in a state of attention to the divine will. Nor is there any fear of negligence, or doing our work the wrong way; for we are not to let things drop out of our hands. Diligence and exactness is even a part of religion, when that principle

takes place (enjoined by St Paul), "to do all things to the glory of God."

Such an attentive good disposition of soul also gets the name of *prayer*; for the command, to *pray always*, cannot be meant either of vocal prayer, or of meditation; and therefore is only to be understood of the internal frame of the heart, or *inward man*. Such a state in Scripture is called *walking with God*.

Outward helps are by no means to be neglected. The public meetings of devotion are to be frequented, and at several times of the day (when necessary business can allow) a pious book may be looked at, were it but a few lines; and even in the fields, or within doors, at any labour, a petition may be put up, whether in words or silently, since God regards the heart only. A well-disposed heart or spirit can find a thousand ways of expressing itself to the Father of spirits, in prayers or praises, without study or restraint. The meanest of the works of nature, were it but a straw, is matter of adoration; and we have a large field for supplication, when we consider all our wants, and the hazards we run, especially that of forfeiting the happiness designed for us in the next life. As all the attributes of God are infinite, so is His condescension: He suffers children to speak to Him, and delights in true simplicity.

But, as is said already, if all the care we can take is not sufficient to rid us of these pitiful imaginations, but that they plague us even in the time we set apart for prayer and retirement, we should bear them as the punishment of our past errors and vices, remaining united to God in heart and in will, which no power in nature can force. By this conduct our distractions and absurd fancies blow over the sooner.

If it be asked, why people of all ranks, that are plunged in worldly business, either for necessary sub-

sistence, or for gratifying their pride, and all their desires, complain so little of being disturbed with such foolish imaginations? the answer is, that the generality of the world seldom apply their mind to any thing but for their own pleasure in some form or other; and so they cannot be sensible of the imaginations that break in upon those few that set their affections *on things above*, and earnestly desire to please God. If such imaginations are cast in by the devil (as it is commonly thought they are), he does not want to disturb the fancy whilst he is in possession of the heart; or if they are only the natural effect of our disorder since the fall, it may please God to let them tyrannize over us for our purification, and as an antidote to our pride. The blessed God wants not to disturb us, much less to destroy us. Our happiness is His great aim; and in the order of things, purification must go before happiness; for "no impure thing can enter into the kingdom of heaven." What distress of all kinds and degrees must be undergone before the soul can attain to that necessary purity or holiness, is as impossible to conceive, as the joy that waits it through all eternity.

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